

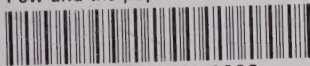
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ROBINSON P. D. BENNETT, M.A.

THE PEW AND THE PUPIL

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THE PEW AND THE PUPIL

THE PEW AND THE PUPIL

By

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FOREWORD

It is the accepted theory that the Sunday school is the child of the Church. It is a beloved child, but a child whose life has been somewhat prejudiced because of the rather distant relationship between it and its parent. That relationship is too often analogous to that of the little boy whose father—a commercial traveler—came home only on Sundays. One day the father had occasion to administer corporal punishment to the youngster, and the little fellow ran to his mother crying, "That man that comes around here on Sundays has been spanking me." Too often there is no organic union between church and Sunday school; no unity of substance or life.

The primary intent of the Bible school to-day is that it might be the whole church at work studying the Bible, with a view to the building of full rounded Christian character. It is the church in studious session, endeavoring to give the message of the risen Christ to the souls of its members. Far from realizing that this is the function of the Bible school, the church has often regarded the school merely as its protégé. Often the church has cast it adrift, to

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thrive by its own devices, sometimes even charging and receiving rent from the school for the use of the rooms used by it. To many churches the Sunday school has been a source of far greater financial profit than expense.

It is a fact that seems improbable—but is nevertheless true—that the Sunday school has grown up almost unrecognized. It is but a half century ago that it obtained real recognition by the churches. Up to that time it chose its own officers, elected its own teachers, and made its own rules. In the theological seminaries no instruction was given the student in the management of a Bible school, though he was diligently instructed in the conduct of a choir, and in determining the number of delegates from the presbytery to the General Assembly.

The fact is, that the Bible school, like Mrs. Stowe's "Topsy," simply "grewed," or like Melchizedek, was without Father or Mother Church.

The true view of the school to which we must eventually come is that the Bible school and the Church have a definite and recognized unity. "The Sunday school," says Bishop Vincent, "is a department of the Church of Christ in which the word of Christ is taught, for the purpose of bringing souls to Christ, and of building up souls in Christ." The aims of a Bible school as considered by Dr. Hurlbut are threefold—"Knowledge, character and service." If we should add to these, worship, we would have the great functions of the Christian Church.

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And between two such powerful organizations as the church and the school, the Pew and the Pupil, the closest unity should prevail, for their purposes are identical.

Dr. Hurlbut in "Organizing and Building Up the Sunday School" says: "The general fact is established that the Sunday school as an institution belongs to the church, is under the care of the church, has a claim upon moral and financial support by the church, should be a feeder to the membership of the church, and should gratefully accept the supervision of the church. It should regard itself, and be recognized by all, as in many ways the most important department of the church." Again he says: "But it is not to be forgotten on the other side, that the Sunday school is not superior to the church, nor independent of it, but subsidiary to it; hence the church should be able to exercise some control over the school if such control should be needed. . . . No one should undertake to conduct a church Sunday school unless he thus has the definite assurance . . . that his church is officially supporting him."

It is an established fact that reverence and worship are closely connected with all truth, and that the mind of man must ever be, and naturally is, reverent before a revelation from his Maker. Therefore the instructional portion of education cannot and must not be divorced from the reverential and the worshipful. We are in a fair way, however, in these days, toward such a divorce. We are separating the instructional

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from the devotional, by keeping the Sunday school apart from the church ; and we are separating the devotional from the instructional by keeping the church at too great a distance from the life of the Sunday school.

We must agree that, whatever else we do for the child, we must bring him consciously and reverently into the presence of God, and teach him by word and by example how to worship. The modern Church has come to realize that that church is doomed to failure where the chief feeder for her life is drawn away by false ideals. We must get rid of this hiatus between the life of the school and the life of the church. We must in some manner bridge the chasm between the Pupil and the Pew.

It is to bridge the chasm, and to draw the Pupil to the Pew, and the Pew to the Pupil, that I have ventured this little volume.

R. P. D. B.

Germantown, Pa.,
September 10, 1914.

PART I

BRIDGING THE CHASM

CHAPTER I

WHY?

Why relate the Sunday school more closely to the life of the church? *First, because the church herself has need of such a vital union.* This is shown in the inefficiency of the present generation of church members. Modern ideals of church work demand changed views regarding the attitude of the minister toward the detailed work of the church. It is gradually coming to pass that no longer do we expect the pastor to do everything. The modern church is realizing that the true conception of religious activity does not consist in loading upon one paid official the duties that belong by right to the church member himself. For example in many of our modern churches the women are doing most of the church visiting. In one church the women paid thirty-six hundred calls in a year. The pastor looked after the newcomers, the sick, and those who needed spiritual guidance and advice for some particular occasion. It has always been the teaching of the Christian Church, that the real soul-winning work of the Church should be done by the laity. Paul, in the twelfth chapter of Romans, enumerates seven

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duties assigned by the Holy Spirit to the members of the Church; prophecy, ministering, teaching, exhorting, giving, ruling, showing mercy. Now of these seven duties, there is only one that belongs exclusively to the pastor—that of prophecy. The rest he must share with the congregation, and they with him. So in the words of the late John H. Converse, “The duties of the layman in comparison to those of the pastor are as six to one.” Yet we are constantly piling the six upon one.

This is not by any means always from selfishness and inertia, but from a lack of knowledge of the meaning and responsibilities of church membership. It is because the divorce between the Sunday school and the Church has been of such long duration, that the pupils come into the pews untrained in the meaning and the methods of church membership. There is a lack of the knowledge of the meaning and intent of Christian discipleship. Its ideals of worship they have not acquired. Its social and missionary message they have not learned. Even their knowledge of the Scriptures is imperfect. There is no conception of the activities that ought to characterize a working church. The Boards of the church and their varied activities are a mere name. Hence there is the constant need in the Sunday school of teaching the principles, privileges, and duties that characterize a church member. There is a deplorable lack of leadership in the Church at the very time when such leadership is

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essential. To fail to raise up leaders in such an age of opportunity is the greatest disaster that can come upon the activities of the Church. Hence the need of an extremely close affiliation between the church and the school in an attempt to train the pupil to look forward to the church as the proper arena for the exercise of his acquired abilities.

There is, too, a very inadequate valuation put upon the Christian Church by the average member. I am led to feel this has come about as the result of the indifference with which the Church and its high office has been treated so frequently by the Sunday school; and by the substitution, on the part of the parents, of the Sunday school for the Church, in the religious life of the child. That the church member has less of a regard for the ordinances of church worship than his grandparents, is due, among other things, to the ease with which the Sunday-school children slip out of the school into the world without considering the necessity of fellowship with the Church of Christ.

On the part of the young people there is too often an attitude of indifference, if not of real antagonism, to the Church. This has sometimes been brought about by the example of parents, but altogether too often it has been due to the failure of the Sunday school to train the pupil in the duties of the pew. There has grown up about the Church proper, the center of whose organic and spiritual life is the Sacraments, a sort of "Outer Church," composed of

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those who refuse to come into its inner life and activities. The Sacraments are neglected by a large proportion of the membership. Letters must be sent to members reminding them of their privileges and duties. The support of the Church is neglected until one member carries actually one-and-a-half non-contributing members. Only one third of the Church is interested in the benevolent and missionary work of the Church.

There is a lack of accessions which drives the Church to extreme measures in filling up her depleted ranks. There is a fearful leakage in her membership. In the presbytery to which the writer belongs there has been a loss during the last ten years of forty-three per cent of those received upon confession. Even then the accessions have only just kept pace with the growth of the population. The growth of the Presbyterian Church, during the last few years, has been only one per cent. If it were not for the four hundred thousand Sunday-school pupils that are yearly taken into the membership of the Church, the Christian church in the United States would die out within fifty years. While we cannot altogether trust the reliability of figures, they mean something to us as illustrating the lessons we must learn of the necessity of getting the pupils of our Sunday school in closer touch with the life of the Church through membership.

Then, the Church is not getting the children related to her life as she ought. Only about forty

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per cent of the children, at most, unite with the Church. It is said that, on the average, we finally win to the Church but one or two out of five of the children that pass through our schools. "Such a percentage of infant mortality," says Dr. Hurlbut, "would disgrace any city or county." Testimony is constant that the children who are eventually lost to the Church are they that have no habits of church attendance. It is also noticeable that of those who unite with the Church, those who during their Sunday-school years have not acquired church-going habits soon drop out of attendance and ere long find their names upon the "suspended list."

Some time ago, Dr. James A. Worden, of the Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work, sent out to twelve hundred pastors a Questionnaire concerning the matter of the church attendance and church membership of Sunday-school pupils. The answers to his questions were illuminating.

The first question asked was, "What per cent of your Sunday-school pupils regularly attend the public worship, morning or evening?" In replying, most of the pastors admitted that they could not tell. Those that gave any figures said that about twenty-five per cent attended. One said that fifty per cent of those above the primary grade attended. One thought that his pupils came in a proportion as high as seventy-five per cent. One had the temerity to suggest that his pupils attended in the ratio of

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ninety-five per cent, but it was noticeable that he did not give the number of pupils in his school.

The second question was, "What proportion of the Sunday-school pupils who are brought into the Church attend preaching services?" One pastor said, "About ninety per cent." Another said, "All." Many said, "Almost all."

If ninety to a hundred per cent of those who attend service come into the Church, then surely the church ought to get more than twenty-five per cent to fifty per cent of its pupils at the church services. No business firm would think for a moment of neglecting such a profitable piece of business as the gathering of ninety-per-cent dividends.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, through its Board of Sunday School Work, sent out a Questionnaire as the basis for a survey to determine the attendance of Sunday-school pupils upon the services of the Church. These were sent to the children of the Sunday school, and they were asked whether or not they attended church, either with teacher, parent or alone, and they were asked to state what they most enjoyed in the service. They were sent to the young people of the Sunday schools, who were asked their reason for failure to attend church; whether the pastor attracted them; what part of the services they enjoyed; and what portion they did not enjoy. They were sent to the parents, who were asked concerning the regularity of their chil-

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dren's attendance at church, whether these children went on account of personal interest or on account of compulsion, and whether or not the services seemed to be attractive to them. They were sent to the Sunday-school superintendents, asking the same questions and many more. They were sent to pastors, requesting information concerning any method pursued by them to attract the children to church.

Evidently it is the present opinion of the Church that she has not been making her "bid" for the children of the Sunday schools as she ought to do. The Sunday school is the greatest field for evangelism in the world. Some one has said that "when you convert an adult you convert a unit, but when you win a child you win a multiplication table."

In the year 1892, according to the statistics given us by the Presbyterian Board of Sabbath School Work, fifty-two per cent of the additions to the Church came from the Sunday school; in 1902 the proportion was sixty per cent, but in 1912 it had fallen to forty-nine per cent. Does this mean that the most hopeful and fruitful source of supply to the church membership is failing? In 1902 twenty-four per cent of church members were in the Sunday school; but in 1912 the proportion of those in the Sunday school who were church members had fallen to twenty-one per cent.

The second reason why the Sunday school should

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be related more closely to the church is this: The child needs the church.

The child who does not enter the fellowship of the Church is lost to Christ and to his cause, and hence lost to self and to life eternal. Recall the facts from Dr. Worden's Questionnaire that only about twenty-five per cent of the pupils of the school attended the services of the church with any regularity. Of these twenty-five per cent, nearly ninety-five per cent become Christians and unite with the Church. Then remember further that of all those who unite with the Church from the Sunday school, nearly all are from the list of twenty-five per cent that have been regular in their attendance upon church worship. Thus we find that the members of the Sunday school who do not attend church and are not yet Christians are not likely to confess Christ as their Saviour.

Too often the habit-forming years of a child are not its church-going years; too often the years when character is being formed are not years in which they are being taught the value and the saving grace of going into God's house to hear the preaching of the Word, and of acquiring those habits of reverence and worship which ought to characterize a true Christian.

If a child is kept away from the house of God, the ideals formed are not the ideals of the Christian Church, which we are told is the "pillar and ground of the truth," and the repository of real

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Christian activity. The child is rapidly being imbued with a sense of the finality of his own judgments, instead of realizing that the Church of the living God has ever been, and ever will be, the teacher of the truth.

CHAPTER II

HOW?

How is this closer union between the church and the Sunday school to be consummated?

Primarily by relating the church members more closely to the Sunday school. When a bridge is built the work is done from both ends simultaneously, until the growing arches meet in the keystone. If the chasm between the Sunday school and the church is to be effectively bridged, the bridge must be built out from both the church end and the Sunday-school end. The pew must be brought closer to the pupil, and the pupil must be brought closer to the pew.

To begin with, there is need of a larger attendance of parents at the sessions of the school.

There are two main channels through which parents influence their children. They are the methods of precept and example. And of these two, example is by far the more potent. One of the interesting things about so many of the unbelievers with whom the pastor comes into contact, is their constant readiness to praise the piety and religious life of their parents; a piety and faith, however,

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which they are not willing themselves to profess. It is a commentary upon the value of example. Childhood is quick to grasp the larger import of example and quite as ready to discredit the precept that is not supported by example. The young Timothy acquired his faith not so much from "the Book" as from the life of his mother Eunice, and his grandmother Lois.

Now this matter of influence has a direct bearing upon the subject of the relation of the parent to the Sunday school. Ask yourself for a moment to what extent the members of the church are in the Sunday school. Where are the parents of the pupils during the sessions of the school?

There is at the bottom the Beginners Department. Are the parents present there in any great numbers? Usually they are, for the little ones must be brought to school, and it is usually the mothers who bring them. It is a sight acceptable to the angels in heaven to see a mother leading her little toddler into the school of Christ where the child can learn of him who is essentially the children's Friend. And this mother's presence will be better far for the child, and for the progress of the department. For who can tell when there will come over the heart of the child that awful darkness of lonesomeness; and just as the little choristers are lifting their sweet voices in the carol, "Ring, Bells, Ring, High Up in the Steeple," there may come a discordant wail for "mother!" and the floodgates

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of the child heart may be opened. And what a joy it must be to the God of mothers to see the mother sitting to hear the eternal truth of God taught to her child! There are a few parents in the Beginners Department. There ought to be more.

Are the parents in the Primary Department? Not very many of them. The little one has now come to the age where it may be trusted to toddle to school holding the hand of an older brother or sister. Sometimes there is a nurse to take the child, and occasionally the parents come as visitors. Most of the teaching in the Primary Department is done by young, unmarried women. There is for the most part no perceptible number of mothers in active touch with the Primary School.

Are they in the Junior Department? Fewer here than in the Primary. This Junior age is the age when the child is able to come entirely alone and the parents are satisfied to "send them to Sunday school," rather than to accompany them.

And what is true of the Junior Department is increasingly true of the Intermediate and Senior departments. Here the parents come occasionally as teachers, and now and then as visitors. But for the most part the teaching is done by young men and young women.

It is only when we come to the Bible classes that we begin to find the parents, but this is, in most cases, the time when the boys and girls have grown up and gone from the home, or have left

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the Sunday school and no longer need, as they used to need, the example and encouragement of the presence of father and mother with them.

Our problem, therefore, is to get the parents into the Bible school. And I make the claim that they ought to be there, if at all possible, for the sake of the boys and girls, to impress upon them by such presence the vast importance of a knowledge of the word of God as the standard of life. It is difficult to get the Bible into the life of the child when there is precept but no example. The fathers and mothers ought to be in the Sunday school for the sake of holding their boys and girls there.

We are all familiar with the problem of the school in holding to its services the youth whose age is above fifteen or sixteen years. It is the restless period of life. It is also the period when imitation of superiors is a controlling factor in the child's estimate of things. And when Tom and Peggy look about the Sunday-school room and fail to discover the faces of their parents either in the capacity of teacher, visitor or student, they begin to think that it is perhaps time that they began to omit Bible study as father and mother have done. They come home and begin to say to you, "Father, why must I go to Sunday school?" And you casually reply, "Because it is good for you, my son," or, "Because I say so." But if you imagine you are going to escape with that kind of answer you have still another opportunity. For the boy checkmates you in

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this fashion, "Say, father, when did you stop going to Sunday school?" And there will ensue a very unhappy and uneasy quarter of an hour for you, as you try to explain why it was that you left Sunday school at just that period of your boyhood life, and yet expect him to keep on doing the very thing for the observance of which you see no necessity. I cannot but feel that if the parents would put their seal upon the value of the Sunday-school services by attendance upon them there would soon be found the solution of the problem of why so many children leave Sunday school at the "teen age."

You parents ought to be in the Sunday school for the purpose of instructing the boys and girls, in the midst of an atmosphere which is conducive to such instruction. And you ought as parents to be in the school for the sake of the relation which the Church ought to sustain as the true parent of the Sunday school. Of this I have already spoken in my Foreword. When you consider that the Church draws ninety-five per cent of its life from the Sunday school, and again remember that the great need of the moment is a closer relation between the Church and the child, you will see at once the value of your presence in, and your active support of, the Sunday school.

Again, as to method, this relation between Sunday school and church may be consummated by making a point of contact between the various de-

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partments of the school, and the general life and activities of the church.

There is the Cradle Roll. Its possibilities for relating the Sunday school to the church are still unappreciated. It is often the connecting link which unites a whole family to the church. As an illustration, the following is an "all-I-can-remember" version of a story once told to me by Dr. James A. Worden.

"Ed" had married one of the girls of the church, and they had settled down to housekeeping in the suburbs, in the coziest little two-story nest imaginable. "Ed" was not a church member, but a morally good fellow and a fair type of "husband." Of course the honeymoon waxed and waned, as in all similar cases. At first they both went to church quite regularly, she to show off "Ed," and "Ed" to fulfill his duty as a husband and his devoirs as a lover. But as time went on and the honeymoon was in its last quarters, the church-going ceased for "Ed." He preferred the club on Sunday morning, or the stroll in the park or on the golf links. She went occasionally, from duty, but with little heart. After a while they dropped out entirely. One day the supreme event happened. A little stranger knocked at their heart's door, and they hastened to open to him. Some one told the superintendent of the Cradle Roll of the Sunday school that there was a new arrival at the home of the "Eds." She, being a person fitted to her task and alive to

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her opportunity, at once presented herself at that home with a card of enrollment for the newcomer and a bunch of flowers for the mother.

Her visit over, she hastened to notify the pastor that there was a new man in the parish. He in turn hastened, as every pastor should, to look out for the new lamb of his flock. "Ed" happened to be at home. "Happened," shall we say? Not exactly, because this was a Presbyterian home. The pastor had made his visit synchronous with the home coming of Mr. "Ed." Said the pastor: "This baby must be baptized next Sunday. Mrs. 'Ed' is a member of the Church and it is her duty as a Christian mother thus to devote her child to God."

"Of course," said the mother enthusiastically. "You'll go; won't you, Ed?"

"Why, of course he will," said the pastor. "He'll be only too proud to go."

"Well," said "Ed" rather dubiously, "I don't suppose a little water will hurt him, but I won't hold the baby."

But we all know what a woman can do. We obey without knowing. And so the next Sunday, when the pastor came down from the pulpit toward the baptismal font, there stood Mr. and Mrs. "Ed," and it was the strong and yet trembling arms of "Ed" that held the child.

When it was over the pastor said, "Now look here, 'Ed,' do you believe that what we have done here is a good thing?"

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"Sure!" said "Ed."

"And you believe in all the vows your good wife took for that boy?"

"Certainly I do," said he.

"Then," said the pastor, extending a cordial and persuasive hand, "why don't you be a man and stand with that little wife in helping her keep them? Why don't you do the manly thing and confess your faith?"

"It looks reasonable," said "Ed."

And the next Sunday when that young man stood before the church to confess Christ, the pastor realized as never before the power that lay in the Cradle Roll to help bridge the chasm between the world and the Church. Truly, "a little child shall lead them."

Then there are the pupils of Primary and Junior age. These are, for the most part, able to attend the services of the church either with their parents or without. Hence the problem is a problem of relating the child of the Sunday school to the preaching services of the church, and inculcating the habits of worship in the house of God. This I believe to be the most hopeful age for that particular matter which this book sets forth. The habit-forming years are these during which the child is in the Primary and Junior grades. Let these "habit-forming" years be once made "church-going" years, and the matter of the relation of the pupil and the pew is settled. The plans then for relating the child to

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the services of the church should be the chief concern of every pastor.

It is a hopeful sign of progress that in these latter days so many pastors are seriously taking up the matter of the children in the church. As a consequence we have to-day a number of plans by which to attract the child to the church, to get the pupil to the pew and keep him there. There is the plan evolved by Henry Howard Hulbert, D.D., and called the "Children of the Covenant," which provides for the gradual nurture and training of the child in church ideals from his earliest days. It is divided into three divisions: (1) The Home Division, which keeps a general supervision of the child until of Sunday-school age. It is the period embraced by what corresponds in the Sunday-school to the "Cradle Roll." (2) The "Little Church." This is composed of all children below the ages of nine or ten, and the service for them is held, after a brief stay in the church building, in a separate room. (3) The Graduate Members. These children are supposed to stay to the church service, and are gathered in bands or groups for work. This is an excellent method, but it seems to have this fault, that it takes the children out of the church service into another room, which somewhat weakens the purpose of the organization, which is to associate the children with the worship of the congregation.

There is also the "Go to Church Band," whose

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object is to get the child to church, and in whose methods there appears the "reward" idea. A record is kept upon a card of the attendance of the child and a reward, usually a pin, is given for perfect attendance. The real value of this reward is a matter of question. But the general plan keeps the child in the church.

Then there is the plan first followed, at least in any organized form, by James M. Farrar, D.D., of the Old First Church in Brooklyn, and which many pastors have found to be the happiest solution of the whole matter. It is the plan which the writer has adopted in his own church and carried on for a number of years with constant and ever-increasing success. This plan and its values you will find in a little volume by the writer called, "What I Tell My Junior Congregation," published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work.

We are now celebrating in my own church the tenth anniversary of this "Junior congregation," and its fruitage amply justifies the care expended in its planting and cultivation. The main idea is, of course, the affiliation of the child and the church, and an attempt to utilize the habit-forming years of childhood, especially those in the Junior period, to inculcate the very necessary habit of church-going and sermon-hearing. The "Junior congregation" seems better to solve the problem of tying the Bible school more closely to the church than any other

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scheme yet followed. In the first place, it attracts the child to the service by assigning him a place definitely his own. He sits in one of the two front pews, or in one of the little chairs placed before the pulpit. He gets what every live boy or girl wants in any audience—the front seats. In the second place he receives the attention that every real child enjoys. For a brief period in the service of the church, he is “the whole thing.” The minister talks to him, the people are watching him, the hymn that follows the sermon is usually for him. He goes away not only with the truth impressed upon him, but, better still, carrying the impression that in some real and vital way he is a part of that church; he tells his boy and girl friends with pride that that is “his church.”

In the third place, he hears the gospel in the form in which it was intended to be delivered. It was by the “foolishness” of preaching that men were to be saved. And he hears it in such form that he can grasp and hold it. And he does hold it. Again and again have my people said to me, “John comes home and tells us almost every word of the children’s sermon.” Years afterwards, when the young people come into the church on confession of their faith, have we heard from their lips the testimony, “I shall never forget that sermon you preached to the Juniors, when I was one.”

There is an absolute freedom in the delivery of a children’s sermon that comes to a pastor at no

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other time. He can speak the truth in all simplicity and fearlessness, for who would criticize a man talking to children if he should condescend to be simple, or graphic, or unconventional. We are not by any means recommending a misuse of the language in which we preach, nor a descent to the vulgar or irreverent. But at times there is a power in the unconventional, and it does most preachers good to come down now and then to the level of the child, and to the level of the street, and speak the language of both.

In the fourth place, the "Junior congregation," in its simple organization and methods, is teaching constantly what the Bible school too often fails to teach, because, for the most part, it has no time in which to teach it—the meaning of the church, and the various courts, boards and ordinances of the church.

Here the child is taught loyalty to the organization, the lack of which is responsible for so much difficulty in raising the funds of the church, and for so much carelessness on the part of the individual as to his church duties.

Our "Junior congregation" contribute regularly each Sunday through their own little "Duplex" envelopes to the general church support, and to all the various missionary boards of the church, and I am glad to say that the number and amount of the contributions is increasing.

The "Junior congregation" is constantly spoken

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of during the church services, prayed for and held before the church. There is a constant attempt to instill into the children's mind the fact that they are not merely attending the church of their elders, but that they are in their own church, of which they are as large and important a part as the eldest elder, the truest trustee, or the dearest deacon.

Every member of the "Junior congregation" has a place in the church, and knows it. And, better still, every member of the church realizes, and is constantly bidden to realize, that these boys and girls of the Bible school are baptized members of the church. So there is no waiting for that indefinite day to come when the child and the church, the pupil and the pew, shall be united. They are united from the beginning in the "Junior congregation," and upon that day when they confirm the baptismal vows made in their behalf, they enter the Senior congregation, which, as Paul would say, is not "another," but a different part of the same.

And now we come to the pupils of Intermediate age. How shall we relate them to the Church?

This is the period of the gravest responsibility. This is the period when youth begins to form its independent ideals. It is the age of susceptibility and yet of reason. It is the period of the most glorious opportunity for the teacher. It is the time for soul-winning, so that the relation of the pupil and the church should be that of a confessed re-

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ligion, a definite union with the membership of the Church and a partaking of its Sacraments.

At this time of life the relation of the child to the Church becomes most intimate and personal. It is not dependent upon a good equipment, or an organization, nor upon any one or two particular methods. There is no school so small or weak, nor any system so lacking, that the pupil cannot be won for Christ, if that is our definite purpose, and we strive earnestly as teachers, officers and pastors to obtain it. If any school does not win its pupils to Christ it will probably not be due to any lack of equipment or methods, but to the lack of an earnest determination of the pastor and teachers.

A peculiar opportunity is given just here to the faithful teacher and pastor. Here is a harvest ripe to the reaping. Here is character in the making that can be modeled after the pattern set by the Son of God. Here is life that in its progress may be turned in to follow the pathway of the Christ. It is time to begin the reaping of the harvest when you have come to the Intermediate years of the pupil's life.

Therefore the surest way at this period to unite the child to the Church is to unite the child definitely to Christ. Once the Saviour's, he will come out honestly to confess his Master.

This is the time also for the pastor to urge upon the child already a member of the visible Church through baptism the necessity of confirming these

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baptismal vows, of uniting with the Church, and going to the Sacrament. From the earliest days of the Church, children have been received upon a confirmation on their part of the faith exercised for them during their infancy by believing parents.

These Intermediate years are the "years of discretion" at which, most church governments assure us, children are to be taken into fellowship with the Church. In the Roman Catholic Church confirmation has become a sacrament, because of the institutional ideal of the church; by it the child is supposed to receive special grace at the hands of the priest. The denominations which believe in the regenerative power of baptism also believe, for the most part, in the efficacy of the laying on of the hands of the priest or minister in confirmation.

All others, with few exceptions, believe that "not only those that do actually profess faith in, and obedience unto, Christ, but also the infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized," and that "all children born within the pale of the visible Church are members of the Church, . . . and when they have arrived at years of discretion, they are bound to perform all the duties of church members."

The moment at which they come before the church to assent to the faith in which they were baptized is the moment of their confirmation. The Book of Common Worship of the Presbyterian Church indicates that this may be accompanied by the laying on of hands, at the discretion of the min-

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ister. There is no word of a so-called "conversion" or even of a "confession."

We call attention to this matter just here for several reasons:

First. Because we have wandered far afield from the early church ideals in the matter of a child's Christian life and nurture. We have for years past overlooked the fact that children are already members of the Church by baptism. We have been waiting too long for a manifestation in a child's life of that which does not often come until most of us get well along in the Christian journey—a lively and distressing experience of sin.

We have forced upon the child a creed from without, while neglecting the development of the God consciousness from within. We have been waiting too long for that uncertain point called by us "years of discretion," and have been afraid of asking him to confirm his baptismal vows and confess his faith in Christ for fear of that undefined thing called "irresponsibility." We have forced the child into the mold of his parents' life and experiences, forgetting that within the child lie the possibilities for religion and Christian living.

We have held up the child as a type of the inhabitants of the kingdom of God, and yet have told him that he needed conversion before he could enter that kingdom.

Bushnell revolutionized the idea of child discipleship when he said that it was "possible for a child

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to show some really good impulses." We have been won to the idea that it is possible for a child to grow up into a fervent love for Christ without ever knowing any departure from that love. The improper relation of the Church to her children in the past is shown by our catechisms, which were made for adults. We had not then learned that it was not necessary to have experienced a dogma in order to be a disciple of Jesus.

Christianity in childhood is like the bud of a precious flower that will, if the atmosphere be favorable, slowly and naturally unfold. Moreover, we are learning what Aristotle showed us, that virtue need not be a matter of deliberate choice, but grow up in the life of the child in the atmosphere of a Christian home.

Years ago the American Tract Society published a volume called "Persuasive to Early Piety," which began with impressing upon the child his utter sinfulness, and ended with a vivid description of hell fire. A collection of hymns for children, in 1852, contains such advice as this:

"Little children, stop to think;
Turn away from ruin's brink."

The little child was taught to sing:

"Lord, at thy feet ashamed I lie,
Upward I dare not look.
Pardon my sins before I die,
And blot them from thy book."

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Now what we are to do at this interesting age of puberty and adolescence is to look upon the baptized child as already a member of the Church, and teach him to look forward with eagerness to the day when, informed as to the vows and duties of a member of Christ's Church, he shall be willing to assume both.

Our second reason for emphasizing this confirmation is because this is the Scripture method of bringing children into the Church. So Christ himself came. And we are to remember that the church of Christ's day and of our day are one. There is no difference in the mind of God between the Church of Moses and the Church of America. The covenant of the Church was made with Abraham, and confirmed in Christ. The method of entrance was a threefold method:

There was faith—Abraham believed God.

There was obedience—Abraham obeyed God.

There was a rite—Abraham was circumcised, and all the males of his house.

The entrance into the Church to-day is the same. There is faith, the faith of the parents for the child. There is obedience, the parents' obedience for the child. There is a rite, of baptism, in which the child partakes of the faith of the parent. And all the Church has a right to ask of the child is this—that, having been baptized through the parents' faith, he shall of himself now confirm that faith and come into the Church.

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Again we emphasize this matter because it puts the responsibility where God put it, upon the professing parent. "Behold, I and the children whom Jehovah hath given me." These are the words of Isaiah, through which he indicated his union with his progeny. They are put into the mouth of Christ as indicating the oneness of the Master with his believing brethren. It was the condition under which God recognized parent and child as one.

But you are going to object that these children so received by confirmation of their baptismal vows are not regenerate. I ask you, "How many church members are?" The Church is not wholly composed of regenerates, and never was meant to be. A child's heart must be born again, truly, but when I see a child coming out to confess Christ, I trust that it has been born again.

Then this period of adolescence is the period for the pastor's "Inquirers' Class." Here the real hand-to-hand work can be done. Here the little band, with one common interest, can prepare for the communion, and for fellowship with the church; here the pastor has the supreme chance to cement the life of the child to the life of the church. Some systematic study or set of studies is here pursued, which will enable the confession and service of Christ to be entered upon intelligently. We find the best hour for this is at the close of the Sunday session of the Bible school—if it be held in the afternoon—and the best book, "Coming to the Com-

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munion," prepared by Professor Charles R. Erdman, D.D., of Princeton Seminary, and published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work.

The closer relation between the Sunday school and the church can further be consummated by making the Bible school a field for instruction in the duties, privileges and responsibilities of church membership. We are all of the belief, I feel sure, that the chief end of the Bible school is to make Christian character. The child is the important end of the Bible school, and the child's Christian character is the great purpose in view. But Christian character in these days is not accurately defined without some recognition of the place which service plays in it. The age is too advanced to conceive of a truly Christian character that does not recognize service as a part of its development. And the relation of the child to the various branches of Christian service is becoming a most important part of our religious curriculum. Hence the Church, its Boards, its societies, its history, its forms, ceremonies, ordinances, must ever increasingly form a part of the instruction in the Bible school. For if this is not taught here, where can we expect it to be taught?

Let me suggest a few methods by which the Bible school and the church may be more closely drawn together in the matter of their operations and purposes.

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We can do it by systematically reciting and teaching the Apostles' Creed.

A little tot of three or four was wandering in the garden with his mother in the spring of the year, and seeing the leaves of the ivy unfolding, he remarked, "Mother, de iby leaves are growing." He was unconscious of the pun he had made upon truth. For while the "iby leaves" were growing, the "I Believe's" were also growing in his young heart.

The "I Believe's" are a large part of childhood. Faith is the basis of all child knowledge. So why not teach the grand old creed of the Church? It may be recited weekly, and it may be taught weekly in the Bible school, so that when the child comes into the Church, he can stand up and repeat the creed with the worshiping congregation; entering into its spirit, because conversant with its meaning. So also ought the "Doxology" to be taught. I have been pleased that in our own Bible school the superintendent, in addition to these, has recently adopted the responsive reading of the Psalter, so that the child may accustom himself to doing the same at the Sunday morning services of the church. There can be also injected the learning of the great hymns of the Church, and the history of their composition. There should be the inculcation, by every means, of reverence in prayer, and in the reading of Scripture. This can be aided by the attendance of the pastor in the school, and his

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occasional talk to the pupils upon some one of the ordinances or institutions of church worship. He should make the opening or the closing prayer, and pronounce the benediction.

The general exercises of the school should be such as to make every child understand the close relation existing between the church and the school, and that the worship of each is true worship. There is a place in every well-ordered school for a worship with the same dignity as that which obtains in the church.

And while there are many spiritual Sunday-school superintendents who realize this need, it devolves, after all, upon the pastor to inject worship into the life of the Bible school.

This can also be done by announcing all church meetings and special services in the Bible school, and repeatedly calling attention to the church activities. The special objects of missionary effort should be constantly brought before the children and youth in the Bible school. Matters of a general nature and interest that pertain to the church and congregation should be mentioned to the school. The invitation to attend the morning and evening services of the church should always be given, and in many instances, where there is a "morning school," the school marches in a body into the church building either with or without singing. The general methods of church work, and the work itself, should be so often before the school

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in various ways that the pupils intuitively grasp the methods and customs.

The close relation existing between Church and school may also be emphasized by definitely educating the pupil in the work of the Church.

As already intimated, the work of the Bible school is not merely to save souls, or to "surround the pupil with the walls of a church," but to train him in that complete Christian character which involves not only personal righteousness, but also service for God and humanity. Its aim is to fit him to be in the world, planted like the "good seed of the kingdom" which is to transform the field in which it is planted. Says Dr. Hurlbut in his work, "Organizing and Building Up the Sunday School," "The measure by which a Sunday school accomplishes such a work as this constitutes the final and crucial test of its success."

There is a consciousness that we cannot educate the boy or girl religiously, unless we educate the whole child, and there is a desire on the part of all religious educators to reach the child upon the active side of his nature. Now this training of the pupil in Christian work can be done, of course, in the various societies and mission bands, but not so inclusively as in the Bible school. It is possible for the pupil to become a church worker almost without knowing it, as the whole school is set to do some definite work for Christ and for his Church.

It can be done by precept. The work of the

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Church is and ought more increasingly to be taught from the desk and by the teachers. "Mission Sundays" and "Monthly Concerts" of missions in the Sunday school have already proved that this is one of the surest links to bind the school to an interest in the larger work of the Church in the world.

Then it can be done still better by illustration. We are all familiar with the pedagogical adage, "No impression without expression," and are led to feel at once that the best method, after all, is by actual work. Giving the school a definite part to perform in the missionary activities of the church is one of the surest methods of making a lasting union between the pupil and the pew. Let the school, as a school, support some portion of the church's "Parish Abroad." Let the school assume the support of some sister school under the care of the church. Perhaps the method pursued by the school connected with my own church might be feasible in many another. There is a band within the school, which is composed of all the pupils of the school, organized for the special work of assisting the church in its mission work upon the Laos field. It is without any close organization, but exists in the school to work when needed for that particular purpose.

This can also be done through the method of systematic contributions by the pupils to the various needs of the church. This contribution should be made through some system of "duplex" envelopes,

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and should be made both to the church support and to the benevolences of the church. In turn the church should support the school.

I feel that although this seems to be revolutionary to many, it will meet with approval in the minds of the majority of Sunday-school workers.

Some time ago when we proposed this at a meeting of Sunday-school superintendents there was at once a hearty expression of assent. It should not be necessary to urge that every child be brought up to express its natural instincts of generosity, in regular and sacrificing giving. The idea of proportionate giving by means of the double envelope system is especially helpful in training the child in this matter. But the matter of asking the Sunday school to support the institutions of the Church at home and abroad is the novelty in the suggestion that may not at once appeal. There is, however, no reason why, if the school is now giving to one branch of the church work, say foreign missions, it should not extend its generosity to the whole field of church support.

The ideal plan would be to have the church treasurer, in his annual estimate of church expenses, include the budget of the Sunday school, and have the trustees make a fair allowance for the work, and then let every member of the school, from the beginners to the adults, contribute regularly through the school to the support of the church and all its benevolent operations. There would then be but

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one treasurer, and there would be avoided any separation between the church and the school in the matter of finance. The school would again be more closely bound to the church, and the church to the school. "For where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also."

Should the trustees provide the budget for the school and become interested in its welfare through the close scrutiny of its accounts, the mother Church would be more deeply interested in her child, and the child, contributing consciously to the Church, would feel a deeper and closer fellowship.

As an instance of what can be done by some such method as this, there was given us in "Men and Missions" a demonstration under the caption, "The way one church does business." In this church all treasuries were abolished except the general treasury for current expenses and the treasury for benevolence. Every member of every organization was asked for a definite subscription for the current expenses and for benevolences. With a membership roll of two hundred and three, the financial secretary has personal accounts with two hundred and thirty-five persons. All bills incurred by the various organizations, including the Sunday school, were to be "O. K.'d" by the proper officers and transmitted to the Board of Trustees. All budgets having been approved, no moneys should be raised by any organization for special purposes without permission of the session. The results were cer-

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tainly gratifying. There were raised for current expenses \$3,391, and for benevolence \$530, making a total for the first year of \$4,048, which was an advance of \$1,777 over the previous year. We cannot but feel that some such system must be worked out with reference to the Bible school and the church.

And this union between church and school, pupil and pew, is to be consummated by constantly keeping before the pupil the Church of Christ in all her glory; impressing upon him at all times what she stands for and his relation to her.

The magnifying of the Church as the true body of Christ of which he is the risen Head, and the emphasizing of that close relation between her members, will do perhaps more than all else to attract the pupil to the pew. This may be done by precept, by example of the teacher and church officer, and by surrounding the pupil in the Bible school with a constant and refreshing atmosphere of church activities.

PART II

CHILDREN'S SERMONS FOR USE IN THE JUNIOR CONGREGATION

These sermons are all original, and have been preached to the
Junior Congregation of Summit Church

A BABY RESOLUTION

(New Year Sermon.)

Objects—Four bottles labeled respectively, "Sure," "Thinks," "Moral Glue" and "Do-It."

My Dear Juniors:

The last Sunday in the Old Year! A new little year is just about to be born into the world, and we are going to get ready for him to-day. So I want to tell you about some babies I know.

We have just been talking about the little Babe in the manger at Bethlehem and how weak and helpless he was, and yet how mighty he became. Did you ever think that a human baby is the weakest kind of baby there is in the world? The little chicken, just out of the egg, begins to scratch and run around as soon as he picks his way out of the shell. The little kitten plays with his twin brother and tumbles all over him, biting his feet and ears, and having a good time. The newborn calf goes about the stable after his mother on his wobbly legs and the newborn colt follows his dam out into the meadow. But the human baby simply lies on his back and screams, and the best he can do is to jam his fists into his eye. But the hopeful thing about

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a human baby is that every day he will get a little bigger and a little stronger, until he is a full-grown man. He is weakest when he is just born.

Now I am to tell you of a baby who is strongest the day he is born and gets weaker every day he lives. He is a winter baby, and is always born just at this time of the year. I am guessing that in this land of ours there will be about ninety million of them born this year. We call him "Baby Resolution." Almost every one of us is the father or mother of some Baby Resolution every time the clock strikes twelve on New Year's eve. For, just as men used to believe in a Goddess Minerva, who came bounding full armored out of the brain of Jove, so do these Baby Resolutions come bounding out of the brains and hearts of boys and girls.

This Baby Resolution is a mighty strong fellow the moment he is born, and he stands up at once and stretches himself and says, "I will"—"I will be kind to everyone this year," "I will be obedient to my parents and teachers all the year," "I will keep my temper all the year," "I will hold my tongue all the year," "I will follow Jesus all the year." Oh, how grand it sounds! "Such a strong child," its mother says. "Why, I am sure it can go out and fight the whole world alone." But—and this is the sad part of the story—his strength begins to wane at once. Most Baby Resolutions—so I am told—die before they are twelve hours old. Those that live get weaker and weaker each day.

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They need some tonic to keep them going. I know all about it, for I had several of these Baby Resolutions last New Year's Day, and I could hardly keep them alive until the end of the year.

I am sure you have had the same experience. So I have brought with me some of the food to keep these poor New Year babies through the new year.

First. Give them some of this bottle marked "Sure." Give it to them as soon as they are born. Yes, the very minute! If I ask a boy or girl who is going to do a thing for me, if he means business, and the answer comes promptly, "Sure!" I know it will be done. This "sure" is a sort of backbone strengthener. Old folk call it "determination." But whatever you call it, it is what you mean when you say, "Sure."

Second. Give these babies some of this bottle—"Thinks." How often our good resolutions, made at the beginning of the year, are allowed to die, because we do not feed them a few "thinks." We forget them sadly. "I did not think" has done a lot of harm in this world,

"But evil is wrought by want of thought,
As well as by want of heart."

Third. Give them some of this—"Moral Glue." Glue sticks. And the trouble with the New Year resolutions we make is that they do not stick. Some one asked Abraham Lincoln, "Do you expect to end this war in your administration?" "Can't say,

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can't say, sir." "But, Mr. Lincoln, what do you propose to do?" "Peg away, peg away, keep pegging away." And we know that pegging away did the work. One day a civil engineer saw his little nephew playing in the street, so he called to him and said, "Here, son, take this little red flag in your hand and hold it for me until I come back and tell you to drop it." So he left the boy standing in the street. But when his work was finished he forgot to go back, and did not pass that way until nine o'clock that night. Then, to his horror, he found the little fellow standing at his post holding the flag and shaking with cold. "Why didn't you go home at six?" said the man. "Because you told me to stay," said the boy. It is no wonder he became a great bank president. He could stick.

Fourth. Give them some of this—"Do it."

When our resolutions are carried out, they grow strong. There is an old saying that if you want a thing to grow into a habit, do it. If you don't care to have it become a habit, of course you won't do it. But good resolutions ought to be allowed to grow into habits, and habits into character. To help our good resolutions to grow, feed them with what the grown-up people call "performance."

Then, above all, ask God to help you take care of these good little New Year's resolutions. Ask him daily to make them and you strong. For remember that a new resolution is naturally stronger at its birth than it will ever be again.

MY VALENTINE

II Samuel 1:26—"Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women."

Object—A Valentine.

My Dear Valentines:

This is the season of the year when we are thinking of our sweethearts, when the birds are choosing their mates and when all the world begins to wake up from the winter of selfishness to loving others. Soon it will be Valentine's Day. Just how the dear saint was mixed up with this sending of love tokens we cannot definitely say. We know, however, that the good old saint had a birthday on the fourteenth of February—not the kind of birthday we have, but a birthday into the new life of heaven. The cruel Romans beheaded him on that day and so it was a new birthday for him. He died here and was born again in heaven.

In the early days of the world there was held in February, at this time of the month, what was known as the Lupercalia, or feast of purification. At that time there were peculiar games, at which the young men chose their sweethearts from among the young women. They would put the names of

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a number of girls in a box and each young man would draw out one name. The maiden thus chosen became his sweetheart for the year. This custom was carried by the Romans into England, and has been kept up till the present time.

The Church chose Valentine as the patron saint of the day, when he had been beheaded. A patron saint was supposed to be a saint who would look after a fellow and follow him about to see that he did not get into mischief.

Now, I think that if we combine these two customs to-day we shall make a fairly good combination, because, from my experience, I think there is a very close connection between saints and women. For a really good woman, girls, seems to me to be almost a saint.

When Florence Nightingale, the sweet nurse of the Crimean war, who gave up her home in England and went out to nurse the sick and dying soldiers, used to pass the beds of the men, they would rise up and kiss her shadow as it fell on their pillows. They called her "Saint Florence." And I believe that in the list of saints which the Church holds there are more women recorded than men.

Now to-day is the day for choosing a valentine, and it is the day for choosing a patron saint. I am going to suggest to you that you choose both in one. I wonder if you have guessed the valentine I mean. Abraham Lincoln had such a valentine. Her name was Nancy Hanks. Not a very pretty

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name, nor a very pretty woman, I imagine. But Lincoln loved her very dearly, and never forgot her. He used to call her his "sainted mother."

President Garfield had a valentine whom he dearly loved, and whom he thought was a saint. And when he was made president, the first thing he did was to stoop down and kiss his aged mother.

I had a little girl that was just getting over the whooping cough. When Valentine's Day came she made a valentine for her mother, and this is what she wrote:

"The whooping cough is now called off,
We've left it far behind,
So now we only whoop it up,
For you, my valentine."

I think that the best valentine you can choose is mother. Mother is almost a saint, if not quite. You will never see anyone on this earth that is more like a saint than your own mother. Some day you will cuddle up in her arms and say, as does every other little boy, and as did the little boy that is speaking to you, "Mother dear, I shall never get married, and go away from you, but will stay with you always." And then when you grow up you go and marry some one else. But always remember that the best valentine you ever had was the "near-saint" you called mother, or mamma, or what not.

Once on a time there was a king that lived in Alexandria. He ordered his mason to build him

MY VALENTINE

a great lighthouse very many hundred feet high, that shed its light abroad over the Mediterranean Sea. It was such a beautiful thing that he wanted his name engraved upon it. The mason did not want the king's name to appear, but he did want his own name to be remembered. So he carved his own name in the lasting stone, and put the king's name in plaster. After a while the weather wore away the plaster and there appeared not the name of the king, but the name of the man who really built the lighthouse. So, boys and girls, when all our work is ended, somehow or other there will appear the name of the real saint who made us under God what we are—mother.

So I propose to send a valentine to every mother this week. For mother is the boy's and girl's best earthly friend.

“Nobody knows of the anxious fears,
Lest darlings do not weather
The storms of life in after years;
Nobody knows—but mother.”

GOD'S MEASUREMENTS

Ephesians 4: 13—"The measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Objects—Some units of measure of various kinds. Also a dollar sign, some spectacles, a family tree, a hand, made of paper.

Dear Juniors:

I have here to-day some units of measure. Here is a yardstick and a foot rule, a quart measure and a tape. By these we determine the values of things in mensuration. It is necessary to have a standard of measurement, so that we may get things equal. France and America have different standards of measurements, but we have a system by which we can transform the terms of one measure into the terms of another. The English-speaking world takes its measurements from the yardstick at Westminster, in England. We all take our measurements from the earth's meridian. Our standard of linear measure, the meter, is one ten-millionth part of the earth's meridian. So also we have measures for fluids and for grains, and even for that subtle fluid, electricity.

I suppose all of you boys and girls have been measured. First you were weighed, when you were

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born, and everyone said, "My, what a fat baby!" And then father stood you up against the wall and measured you for your height, and each year you put up a new mark. And then you began to be measured for clothes. I remember that once, when I was being measured for a suit of clothes, the tailor said, "I should think they would keep you indoors when the sun shines."

"Why so?" said I.

"Because," said he, "your shadow is so thin that it might cut down the trees."

Now in the army, you know, they have a standard of measure for every man. Uncle Sam says his soldiers must be five feet six inches tall. Napoleon and Peter the Great each had a regiment of soldiers that had to be seven feet high.

So we measure men. But the standards vary. I am going to show you some of the standards by which men measure other men.

(1) Here is this dollar sign. They tell us that in the various cities of the country they have varying standards of measure. In New York they measure men by this dollar sign. They set it up against them and say, "How much have you got?" That is, how rich are you? Well, boys, I am afraid that if I lived in New York I would not measure up much. And yet that is a poor standard. A great railroad man has just died, and left millions of dollars, but little else. When I was in Atlanta a few years ago they were just letting out of prison

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one of those rich New Yorkers who had money but no honesty. If some of you were to be measured by what you have, you wouldn't stand very high. We used to have a game in the Scouts called "dump your pockets." At a given signal the boys were asked to empty out their pockets, and the boys that had the greatest number of things received a prize. If we were asked to dump pockets to-day most of us wouldn't have much wealth.

(2) Then here is a pair of spectacles. They are supposed to stand for learning, and also for Boston. They say that in Boston the standard by which they measure is, "What do you know?" That's better than "What have you got?" Once I was preaching to a number of children and had asked them the question, "What shall I say?" when one little girl in the back of the room spoke up and said, "What do you know?" But "what you know" doesn't always count. In the Whosoever Mission in Germantown there used to be a room known as the Professional Room, where the superintendent put drunkards who had been lawyers and doctors and even ministers.

(3) Then here is a diagram of the different branches of a family. This we call a "family tree." This is used for a measure of men. They tell us that in Philadelphia this is the standard of measurement. They do not ask, "What have you got?" or "What do you know?" but "Who are you?" "Who were your father and grandfather?" "Where

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did you come from?" Now it is a good thing to be well born. But it is a better thing to be "born anew," as Jesus said to Nicodemus. Family is worth a great deal, but not everything. Many of the sons of noble families are lying in the gutters to-day as drunkards. Mr. Moody said that he once went seeking his ancestors and at last came to a man that was hanged. So he stopped.

(4) Then here is a hand. This is another measure among men. They tell us that this is the measure of the great West. For out in Chicago they do not ask, "What have you got?" or "What do you know?" or "What are you?" but they ask at once, "What can you do?" That is better than the others, but still not a good measure. There are plenty of men who can do things, but who are bad men at heart. Many a general who has commanded an army has died a drunkard.

(5) Now this is the way men measure men. But God has a far higher and better standard. He asks not, "Who are you?" but "What are you?" That is, what is your character. Your character is what you really are. Mr. Moody used to say that your character is "what you are in the dark."

And the character that God sets up for you to measure yourself by is the character of Jesus Christ. He was God's perfect man. "The measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

We are to get to be of that stature in two ways. One way is by constant looking at Jesus and try-

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ing to follow him, and the other is by having his life in us. If we follow him we shall grow like him. If he lives in us we shall measure up to his likeness, for his life will shine out through us. (Tell Hawthorne's "Story of the Great Stone Face.")

LABELS

Isaiah 5:20—"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil."

Objects—Some labels, tags, and so forth.

My Dear Juniors:

I have in my hands to-day some labels such as we use on cans, boxes, bottles, and so forth. These are very useful arrangements. Through them we can tell from the outside of a can at the grocery store what we may expect to find on the inside. They are also useful in the case of persons, for, when attached to the name of a person, they tell us what we also may expect to find on the inside. And they are very useful also when attached to brains. Sometimes we find the title "Dr." or "Rev." or "Mus.D.," or the letters "A.B." or "A.M." or "Ph.D." or "D.D." or what not, which tell us what we may expect to find on the inside of the brains of the man.

But the sad fact about these labels is that they are so often misleading. Not long ago we discovered in this country that much of the food we found in the cans did not agree with the handsome labels on the outside. For example, mother would send

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us to the store to buy peach jelly, and we would find on coming home and opening it that it was nothing but nicely prepared and flavored gelatine, which had never been near a peach orchard. So it is with people. We can read the label, but then we have not seen the real person. So it is with brains. The labels on brains make big mistakes. Some of the most brainless men are carrying about the biggest titles. So we can't always take the labels that the world puts on things, and we must not believe all that the world says about people.

There is a story by Charles Reade about an artist who painted a picture of a beautiful woman. When the critics came to look it over the woman, knowing that the artist was not considered first class, and fearing that he would lose the prize, cut out the picture he had painted from the frame and put her own lovely face behind it. When the critics came, one said the nose was not right, another that the flesh color was hopelessly bad, another that it was poorly drawn. They were extremely chagrined when the picture laughed at them and told them that they were all wrong. The trouble was that they had put a wrong label on the right picture.

And so there are a great many great and good men with wrong labels on them, which the world has fixed. Columbus was called a liar, and Paul was called a reprobate, and Stephen was called a blasphemer. Jesus also was called a blasphemer. We call a boy poor, or dirty, or ill born, and label

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him a failure. And we soon find we are wrong. What a mistake we should have made if we had stuck a label like this on Abraham Lincoln! So we are to be very careful about the labels we put on men and women. And when we travel along the path of life we may be sure that many of the things we find labeled are not like the things they are supposed to be. Some are better and some are worse.

Once, in the olden Bible days, there was a mother who bore a son in the midst of her trouble. He was a poor-looking little waif, and he came at a time when he wasn't wanted, as many a little baby has come, and so his mother called him by the fearfully ill-sounding name of "Jabez," which means "sorrowful." But what a mistake she made! If you turn to a certain chapter in Chronicles you will find a whole list of names, about which nothing is said, and suddenly you will find the name of Jabez, and it is said of him, "He was more honorable than his brethren." So mothers put wrong labels upon their boys, even as grocers put wrong labels upon their goods. Then let us be careful how we call men. Let us not make hasty judgments and call boys names until we know whether or not they fit.

And we are to notice that Satan puts wrong labels on things to tempt us. Wrong things he calls right, and right things he labels wrong, so that we ought to be sure that the jar has good stuff in it before we taste it.

THE LESSON OF THE T SQUARE

John 1:7—"The same came for witness, . . . that all might believe through him."

Objects—A T Square, such as is used by draftsmen. Letters "G," "S," "B," cut out of cardboard.

Dear Juniors:

I have in my hand to-day as our object a T square, such as carpenters and draftsmen use in laying out their work. It is one of the most useful instruments in the world. No building can be put up, or house planned, without the T square.

But like many other objects we have used, there is still another meaning for us in the T square. It is a spiritual meaning, a meaning for Christian boys and girls.

We have often heard it said that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. But there is another saying that is often just as true—that "the longest way round is often the shortest way home." And this is what the T square teaches us. If I want to draw really straight lines from the end of the long upright to the end of the cross-piece, I have to go by the way of the center. In other words, I make a right angle.

Now with the things of God that is often the

THE LESSON OF THE T SQUARE

best way to go. God led his chosen people out of Egypt into Canaan, not by the way that would be a straight line into Canaan from Egypt, but by a roundabout way. He knew that that way was best for them. Sometimes in life we have to go at right angles to get there quickly. Some time ago in a western city a telegraph operator was locked out of the office where he worked at night, because he had forgotten his keys. The office was on the top floor of the big building, and he could not make the other operator hear. So he went to another telegraph station, called up a distant city with which his office had a connecting wire, and asked them to telegraph back to his friend in the high building to come down and let him in. It was a case of going by the way of the right angle or the square. Now God has left us a method like that, of winning boys and girls to Jesus. He himself could draw them to him without our aid. But he prefers to use the square rather than the straight-line method. So he sends his message through the center, and then out to the end. But I am puzzling you. Let us take these letters I have here. The first is "G," that stands for "God." Let us put this letter "G" at the end of the long, upright piece of the square. Then we will take this letter "S," which stands for "self" (yourself or myself), and put it right at the angle in the square. Then we will take the last letter "B," which stands for "brother," and put that at the end of one of the arms of the square.

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Now let us take our text and apply it. John was a witness that all men "through him" might believe. Now let us put "self" for "John," and see what we have. Ourselves are witnesses that through us men may believe. Now begin with God and see how the message goes. From "G" by way of "S," to "B." That is the message of the T square. God wants to send the message of his love to others by the way of us. And let me tell you, boys and girls, that many of God's messages come to others through you. Fathers and mothers have often heard of Jesus' love for them and have accepted him, by the word of a little child.

Dr. Payson Hammond used to tell the boys and girls about a little fellow who came home from a service like this, and, going to his father, who did not love Jesus, climbed into his lap and said seriously, "Father, how old are you?"

"I'm fifty, my son."

"And how old was grandfather when he died?"

"He was fifty-nine, my boy. Why do you ask?"

The little fellow waited a moment and then remarked thoughtfully, "Father, did you ever think you are almost as old as grandfather was when he died?"

"No, my boy, I never thought of that."

"Well, father, do you love Jesus?"

The father thought very hard for a moment before he spoke. Then he said slowly, "I am afraid, my boy, I do not, as I ought."

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"Then, father," said the little chap, cuddling up to his daddy, "don't you think you ought to before you get as old as grandfather?"

The father saw the point and gave his heart to Jesus.

So it is, boys and girls, that you can win one another and even your parents to Christ. God counts on you to take the message. He sends it not in straight lines, but by way of ourselves.

Let us see to it that we take the message.

THE HARD WORK OF SHIRKING

Acts 9: 5—"It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."
(A. V.)

Object—A piece of paper money.

Another raised five-dollar bill has been discovered. It was raised from five dollars to ten dollars by a skillful penman. The original letters had been erased by acid and new ones substituted. It took an immense amount of work to make the change. Large numerals had to be erased and filled in, and many small ones. On one side there were erasures of nineteen numerals, besides much of the scroll work on the bill that had to be done over with a pen. The experts who discovered the bill say that the forger did about five times as much work on the bill as it was worth. Besides all this he ran the risk of being put in jail for a term of years.

Now as I saw this account it came to me that there are many men and women and boys and girls who are working harder to shirk work than they would work if they did the work that it was proper and right for them to do. I once heard of a tramp who carried a spyglass under his arm. When his friend said to him, "Why are you carrying that spyglass?" he said, "I am looking for work—so that

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I can shun it if I see it." Now there are many men like that. They take great pains, as this counterfeiter did, to escape work, and find that the shirking of the work is harder work in the end than doing it.

This is what Paul found. He had been trying to get away from Jesus by working hard at something else, and Jesus said to him that it was hard to kick against the pricks—that is, against Jesus' will for him.

The world is divided into workers and shirkers, and the shirkers have a harder time of it than the workers. If we go down to the City Hall and stand outside the offices of the directors, we shall find a lot of men taking a great deal of trouble to find a place where they won't have to work. They are working to shirk work. It is wonderful to what pains and trouble a man will go to try to swindle his fellows out of a little money, when by the same hard work in a good business he could have made twice as much.

Jonah was that kind of man. God told him to go and preach to Nineveh and he did not want to obey. You all remember well how hard a time Jonah had trying to get away from the work God wanted him to do.

When I was a boy at college the fellows at examination time used to make "cribs" or "ponies" or "trots," as we called them, by which to get through their examinations. I remember how hard

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some of them worked in making these devices to cheat the teachers. Sometimes a boy would write out the lessons on his shirt band or cuff, sometimes on his finger nails. Sometimes he would laboriously write out the whole chapter of a book on paper, and carry the paper with him. The time it took to do all this would have been ample in which to learn all the lessons he had, and he would have remembered it all in the future, which is, of course, the reason we go to school, and not merely to please our loving teachers.

Now, boys and girls, in much the same way we are all working hard to keep from doing the one thing God wants us to do. Some of us are now making excuses to give to the pastor and to the Sunday-school teacher for not accepting Christ. If only we would take Jesus at his word and try to follow him, and put our energies to work to do something for him and for his Church, think what could be done with the time and the brains we use up uselessly and sinfully in making excuse!

I have heard so many boys and girls arguing with mother about going on an errand when they might have been there and back in the time and with the energy they used up foolishly in trying to beg off.

And if you have a hard task, don't waste your energies worrying about it and trying to find a way out of it. Think of this counterfeiter who wasted fifty dollars' worth of time in trying to save five.

THE DISFIGURING POWER OF SIN

Proverbs 6:33—"Wounds and dishonor shall he get."

Objects—An apple and a pencil.

My Dear Juniors:

The writer of the book of Proverbs is speaking to us of the boy or the girl that plays with sin. "Wounds and dishonor shall he get." In the pictures of Satan which we usually see, he is represented as carrying a javelin. This is as it should be, for when a boy or girl begins to have any intimate acquaintance with sin, he is sure to be wounded. Satan throws his darts at him and wounds him sore. Now every sin, like every wound, leaves a scar. To-day I want you to notice one or two things about this scar which sin leaves:

First of all you can come away from sin, and leave it far behind you, but you cannot leave behind the scar. That you must carry always. Notice the forefinger of my right hand. You see a bad scar on it. That was made by a clamshell this summer when I was digging clams. It was pretty sore for a while, but I got over it. I left the clam and the seashore far behind me when I came back this month, but here is this scar which has followed

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me all the way, and will stay with me always.

Second, you can break with an evil habit, but you cannot remove the stain or the injury that comes from it. No, not in all your days.

Once father wanted to teach John this lesson, so he took him out to the old gatepost, and said, "Now, John, take this hammer and drive a nail into that post."

John took the hammer eagerly, and drove in the nail hard.

"Now," said his father, "pull out the nail."

It was hard work, but John accomplished it nicely.

"Now," said his father shortly, "pull out the hole the nail made."

John was nonplused. "Can't do it," he said.

"Right you are," said his father. "Neither can you pull out the marks which evil habits and sins have made in your young life."

Third, the scar of sin affects the whole life. Not one part of it alone, but all of it. Let me show you how that is. I have in my hand here an apple, a beautiful, rosy, red apple. It is like the unstained life of a rosy-cheeked boy or girl. Now, look, I take this pencil and push it through the apple from top to bottom. Just so sin drives its darts through the innocent heart. But what I want to show you is that this scar will be in every part of that apple. So I take my knife and cut the apple into sections. And you see that every layer

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I cut off has this hole in it. So sin defiles and marks with scars every layer of your life.

Fourth, there is no use in trying to hide the scar. We may shut ourselves out from the society of men, but sooner or later the scar will be seen. A few years ago a rich banker named Morisini, who had a beautiful place on the Hudson River above New York, died. He had a daughter who was known as a woman of mystery. She was never seen in public, and appeared only in the evenings, on the balcony. It later became known that, when she was a beautiful child of twelve, a savage dog had bitten her upon the cheeks, tearing the flesh and disfiguring her lovely face for life. So she had shut herself out from everyone and had tried to hide the scars. But at last the story of the scars became known. You can't hide the scars of sin. No face powder or rouge will ever hide them.

Fifth, if the scars can't be blotted out by us they can be covered by the blood of Jesus. The Bible constantly talks about washing away the stain of sin. "Come now, and let us reason together saith Jehovah: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow."

Now look at this section of this apple that I have cut. You see that the hole is in it, but there is something else in it, too. Can you see the five-pointed star that is in it?

Well, that star represents the way out of the difficulty. It is the star of our hope. There are

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five points, and the five points of this star spell the five points of our salvation—they are J-E-S-U-S.

Jesus can wash out the stains of sin. Jesus can cover up the scars of sin. They will still be there, but we shall not notice them when we are covered by his love.

My mother's hands are misshapen and gouty in her old age. This comes from the toil she has spent for me when I was a boy. To me they are beautiful hands, because I love her. And to Jesus our lives, though marred, may be beautiful because he loves us and we love him.

“Jesus paid it all,
All to him I owe.
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow.”

RUBBISH!

Job 17: 9—"He that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger."

Objects—A scrap basket containing a copy of a modern popular song, a dime novel, a package of cigarettes, a wine glass, a whisky flask, a powder puff, and a vanity glass.

In these modern days the fact which our text tells us would be expected. Every boy and girl to-day is accustomed to hear about germs, and the need of cleanliness. But old Job, also, long ago in the early days of the world, knew a thing or two about health, and he said, "He that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger."

Now we know that to be true. Dirt is a germ-breeder, and where dirt is, disease is. Every modern teacher of health teaches us to wash our hands and keep clean if we would grow stronger and stronger.

One day little Johnnie came in to dinner, and mother asked the usual question which every mother asks of every other Johnnie, "Did you wash your hands before dinner, John?"

And Johnnie said, "I washed the right one, mother; the left one did not need it."

Now if John had been as careful of his health

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as he was of his precious time and strength, he would have grown stronger.

Cleanliness, says the old proverb, is next to godliness.

This is "Clean-Up Week" in our city. How nice it would be if every city had a clean-up week! All day I have been going about repeating the little rhyme that was sent to us all:

"Drive out the dirt,
Let in the light—
Clean up, clean up,
With all your might."

Clean up all the rubbish, and then plant flowers, and sow grass seed. Clean up the rubbish, because filth breeds disease, and rubbish breeds fires. And then plant flowers, because it will not do merely to put away the disagreeable things. We must put something pleasant in their places. Who? Why, you, of course.

"Why don't they keep the streets a little cleaner?

You ask, with deep annoyance not undue,

Why don't they keep the parks a little greener?

Did you ever stop to think that "they" means "you"?

And we are to clean up also, because if we do, others will. It is wonderful what an influence a little cleaning up will have over others. Some time ago a little girl, dirty and ragged, living in an alley, was taken to one of the social settlements which

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good men and women have set up to teach the poor how to live. She was washed and had her hair combed, and was then sent home. When the family saw her with clean hands and a clean, smiling face, they washed the baby's face, and brother's face, and even mother and father washed their faces. Next day some other people of the alley, seeing the clean faces of the family across the way, washed their children, and soon the whole place was cleaned up. So let us get together the "rubbish," and put it in the barrels, and put the "rubbish" sign on it, so that the men will come and take it away, and dump it where it belongs.

I have a lot of rubbish here this morning that ought to be burned up somewhere. Here is a "dime novel"—rubbish. Here is a modern comic song—rubbish. Here is a box of cigarettes—rubbish. Here is a vanity powder puff—rubbish. Here is a wineglass—rubbish. All rubbish and dangerous.

Now all this teaches us that we must clean house inside as well as outside. James says, "Cleanse your hands, . . . and purify your hearts." So we must cleanse our hearts. There is a lot of rubbish in every heart. Bad tempers, bad thoughts, bad ideas. The heart collects a lot of that sort of thing that it is best to get rid of, because some day the Devil will put a match to it and there will be a dangerous fire.

Now when we begin to clean up we usually take some sort of disinfectant, to kill the germs and

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to purify the house. And there is no other disinfectant that can clean the house of our hearts like the blood of Jesus Christ. He shed his precious blood on Calvary that every stained heart and every evil heart might be clean. His blood is called "the blood of cleansing." So let us as boys and girls put our lives under the blood of Jesus—that is, we must let him clean us up. But it will not do to clean up merely; we must plant something in the places that have been cleaned. If we simply give up sin, and do no real good, we shall not be much better off.

Jesus once told a story about a man that had a devil. When the devil was cast out of the man, the man's heart was made clean and sweet. But he did not fill it with anything. It stood empty and inviting to the Devil, and what did he do but go off and get seven other devils worse than himself, and march right back into that man's heart, so that the last state of that man was worse than the first. So we must remember that when we clean away the weeds we must sow seed, and that when we sweep out the rubbish of evil things we must fill our lives with good deeds and our minds with good thoughts.

THE EASTER MORNING-GLORY

(Easter Sermon.)

Object—A real morning-glory, or one made of paper, which can be bought at any fancy paper store.

My Dear Juniors:

As I hold up this pretty flower there comes to my mind the first line of an old song:

“And the morning-glory vine
Round my cabin used to twine.”

I am sure that wherever it twines it brings joy and hope, for it is constantly speaking a message to us all, and the message is this: “Hope for the day.”

If you and I should look at this flower at sunset, we would think its duties on earth quite done, and that it had folded its petals for a long sleep. Fold upon fold it would have drawn in its beautiful curtains, and rolled them in upon itself. It is not very pretty then. But see it again at sunrise. Watch it unfold its glorious colors, and open out proudly its varicolored petals, and you would think it almost spoke and said to you, “Good morning, a happy day to you; life is well worth living indeed.”

I recall another “Morning-Glory” that opened

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before my eyes once in Switzerland, when, after a night and a day of rain, I went down to the piazza of the hotel and looked out upon the glorious beauty of Mont Blanc with the sun shining upon the pure white snows of the summit.

But the greatest morning-glory that I know of is the Easter morning-glory. This wonderful morning-glory opened in the city of Jerusalem after a night and a day of gloom, with a wonderful beauty.

It had closed on Good Friday night, with the closing of the tomb of Jesus. It had shut up its petals tight, and seemed like a poor, dead thing. All who loved Jesus mourned. The disciples thought all their hopes were dead. But when the tomb opened like a closed flower unfolding its petals, this glory that came on Easter morning made the whole world glad. It was the Easter morning-glory that bloomed in the garden of Joseph of Arimathæa. You guess my riddle, don't you? This Easter morning-glory was the glory that shone forth from the open tomb of Jesus after he had risen. Like this flower I hold in my hand it closed its portals, on that sad evening when Jesus was laid away, but like this flower of hope and beauty it opened its gates at the first light of the new day. And oh! the wondrous beauty of that glory, that Easter morning. What was that glory?

First, it was the glory of hope. Just as this flower, when it closes, seems to tell us that it will open again at the sun's rising, so the glory of the

THE EASTER MORNING-GLORY

Easter morning tells us that our beloved dead shall live again. It tells us that there will be a "tomorrow" for us all. Poor Peter, who, you remember, had denied his Master, found that this was so, for Jesus sent him a message of hope from the tomb. He writes in his First Epistle, "Who begat us again unto a living hope."

Second, it was the glory of a new life. This plant looks dead and shriveled at nightfall. But see it in the early morning—what a beautiful and living thing! So was it with Jesus. So will it be with us. That poor, shriveled thing we lay away in the tomb is not that which shall be. There will be a new and glorious life for us all. No tomb can keep that back. You recall the story of the German duchess who was an unbeliever, and who had her tomb sealed with iron bands, and an inscription written over it, "This tomb is sealed to all eternity"? But a tiny vine crept into a crack and, growing, pried up the top of the tomb. Life is always the conqueror of death.

Then, third, it is the glory of a new body. We can't have a real man, a complete man, without a body of some kind. The glory of this flower lies in its petals and its colors and its form. Christ had a glorified body that Easter morning that was more beautiful than any flower. Do you want one too? Paul wanted to get into his. His great wish was to put off this earthly body that he might put on his heavenly body.

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Then, fourth, it is a heavenly glory, a glory which we shall share with Jesus in heaven. He prayed for us, you remember, in the last prayer of his life on earth, "I desire that . . . they may behold my glory." Jesus' glory, just think of it! You and I, boys and girls, to behold Jesus' glory at the Father's right hand in heaven! What is all earthly glory to that? Once the Emperor Constantine the Great, in order to reclaim a miser, took a lance and marked on the ground a space the size of a human body, and told him, "Add heap to heap, accumulate riches upon riches, extend the bounds of your possessions, conquer the world: in a few days such a spot as this will be yours, and will be all you will have." But we have the Easter morning promise of a life of glory with Jesus in heaven.

And, last of all, it will be the glory of reunion. We shall have the joy of meeting again all those who have gone before us, and, above all, we shall have the joy of seeing Jesus himself. Dr. Pierre tells us of a ship upon which he came from a long voyage to India. When the sailors on board got near the shore of England, they began to see the homes they loved and the dear ones on the pier. They were so happy that they left all their duties, and the captain had great difficulty in getting them to bring the ship to land. What a "morning-glory" it will be when we see all the loved ones who have gone before us into heaven! And that is what the Easter morning-glory means.

THE LOCKED-UP HEART

Object—A cardboard heart with two parts, back and front, joined by paper hinges, and with the bottom locked with a padlock. The word "Good" written on the inside in large letters.

Dear Juniors:

Here is a heart securely locked, and kept closed until some key shall be found to open it. Does it seem a strange thing to you that we should have a locked heart? Yet every heart is a locked room, a sealed chamber, into which no one can go excepting the one who has the right key.

The Bible tells us that "the heart knoweth its own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with its joy." And again, "The heart . . . is exceedingly corrupt who can know it." All of which means that the heart keeps its secrets locked up and opens them only to him who holds the proper key.

Now there is a proper key. Every lock, as we know, has its proper key. If you do not believe that, then take mother's bunch of keys and try to unlock the closet in a hurry. Every lock has a key. The heart, like the lock, is closed to all but the right key, and there is a right key.

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Now let us try a key that will open this locked heart I have in my hand. Here as a starter is the key whose tag reads, "Wealth." Does this open it? (Try a wrong key which does not fit.) Not a bit of it. This will never do. No! wealth won't open a heart. Sometimes we say, "Oh, if I were rich, what a vast amount of good I would do!" But we do not do it now, and we are not likely to do it then. Riches harden the heart. They do not soften it. Once there was a miser who had much wealth, but no heart. He had had a heart once, but he lost it when he began to get wealth. People looked everywhere imaginable for his heart, but could not find it. His wife hadn't it. His children hadn't it. His friends hadn't it. One day the man died, and when they came to look through his safe for his wealth, they found a little old bag in the corner covered with dust, and in it, all dried up, was the man's heart. Wealth doesn't open hearts.

Here is another key, and this doesn't fit either. We notice the name of this key is "Pleasure." Pleasure, then, cannot open human hearts. By pleasure I mean worldly pleasure, the things that give us a brief and very passing joy. There is no doubt we are amused for a while by these pleasures, but they do not get into the deep, deep places in our hearts. They do not last. Amusements tickle the fancy, and toys please the fancy for a moment; but despite them we may still have our hearts unopened.

Here is another key called "Flattery." That is

THE LOCKED-UP HEART

a big word for small boys and girls, but it means the lovely things which people say about you when they do not mean them. Sometimes this flattery touches our pride and makes us feel quite important, but when we are sensible we say, "Taffy," and we go on feeling just the same.

And here are several keys, each of which, as we try them, we see, fails. They are "Fear," and "Rebuke," and "Hate," and "Sorrow," and "Pain." None of these will get into the heart and open its secrets. But here now is a big key which I have reserved for the last. Let us see. What? Yes, it fits exactly and the heart is opened at once. And what is this key? Let us look: "L-O-V-E." Yes, Love will do it. Love always does it. Now every lock is made for some key, and every key is made for some lock. The heart is made for love, and love was made for the heart. But whose love is it that opens all hearts? It was Jesus' love that opened the heart of this sinful old world. First, the love of mother gets into a boy's heart, and a girl's heart, and prepares it for a greater love to come, and that greater love is the love of Jesus for us. And it is this love of Jesus which, when it gets into our hearts, makes us able to open other hearts.

Once there was a very lovely saint named Catherine, who lived in Siena in Italy, and there was in the jail a very desperate criminal whom no one could subdue. But the authorities let Catherine

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try, and with the love of Jesus in her own heart, she went to him and appealed to his hard heart, and won him for Christ. When he was led out to execution—for he had committed a heinous crime—she alone walked beside him, and before he died he put his rough head on her shoulder and murmured, "Jesus, Catherine, Jesus."

I think you all know the story of "Silas Marner," that grouchy old miser who shut himself out from all love and all fellowship with men because some one had stolen his gold. All he cared for was to pile up the golden coin, and imagine he saw his lost wealth coming back. One day in the midst of a storm he saw something glitter at his doorstep, and, thinking it was his lost gold, he made a grab at it and caught the golden hair of a little child. She was a little waif, and he took her into his home and life. She opened his closed heart, and by her love made a good man of him.

Now, when the love of Jesus opens our hearts, and when the love of others for us opens our hearts, what is found there? Look! (Opening the heart, we find the word "GOOD," written.) This is what we find. "Good." It often takes love to find good in bad men. But in most of us there is some good, and love discovers it. In our home we once had a beautiful picture of a cherub boy, which my grandfather picked out of a junk shop, and had cleaned. Love can find whatever good is in us all.

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Then this key of love can lock up this heart again. That is to keep the good in, and to keep the bad out. When you love Jesus, the good stays in and the bad stays out. So let us lock up our hearts for him.

Here is a story. Once a dear little girl was going home to heaven. She left all she had to the various members of the family—books and toys and dolls and clothes, and so on. She gave away everything but her little heart, and her mother said, "And to whom will you give that?" The child replied, "I am keeping that for Jesus." Keep your heart locked up for him.

THE ARMS OF JESUS

Mark 9:36—"He took . . . him in his arms."

I wonder if any of you have shaken hands with some great man? I remember that, when I was a small boy, my father introduced me to General Burnside. How proud I felt when he took hold of my hand and said, "That boy has a good grip." I remember, too, one very happy day in Newport when I was just a little chap. With my aunt, I was visiting the fort (Adams) and the commander of the fort took me in his arms and carried me across the moat. And I know how proud you would feel if some great good man should pick you up and hold you in his arms. Then you can understand how proud and how important this little boy felt when Jesus picked him up in his arms and hugged him. He did more than that. He put him in the midst of the disciples as an example of what a Christian ought to be—humble and trustful.

I imagine that that little boy was rather disconcerted when Jesus drew him into the circle of those rough fishermen. But he soon got over that when he felt the arms of the loving Jesus about him, and

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felt the touch of the Saviour's cheek on his. Tradition tells us that this little boy was Ignatius, who afterwards became a great bishop of the Church at Antioch.

Now there was another time when Jesus took the children in his arms. It was when the parents brought them that he might bless them. And we read, "He took them in his arms, and blessed them, laying his hands upon them." Every child held by Jesus is blessed.

I like to think what it must have been to be held in the arms of the Son of God. There was a time when Jesus himself was held in human arms and blessed. You remember how old Simeon took him in his arms in the temple, and blessed him.

What do the arms of Jesus mean for you boys and girls? They mean, first of all, love. Jesus loved this little child and he loved all little children. He did not take this boy or the little babes up in his arms because he had to, or merely because he thought he ought to, to please the parents. He caught this little fellow up and cuddled him. And he will cuddle every child here to-day if you will let him. His arms are ready to take you as soon as you want to make friends with him.

Then the arms of Jesus mean care for you. We have been studying Jesus as the Good Shepherd in that beautiful shepherd Psalm. And we know now that the arms of Jesus are stretched out over us, and put about us to care for us. When Jesus

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took up those little children in his arms he was fulfilling the words which the prophet Isaiah said of him, "He will gather the lambs in his arm, and carry them in his bosom."

A poor little ragged boy was arrested in a great city and brought before the judge. When the judge asked him about himself, he said, "I'd 'a' been better if some one had only kept me." Jesus will keep you in all times of danger and temptation. "The eternal God is thy dwelling-place, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

Then the arms of Jesus mean safety. His arms were stretched out to save us from the death of sin. When the nails were driven into his loving hands on the cross by his enemies, and those hands that had held the little children were stretched cruelly upon the arms of the wooden cross—those hands which had been stretched out to us in love—he died for us. He seemed to say to you and me, "Come into my arms and I will save you."

Some years ago a steamer was coming from California when fire broke out, and it was seen that the ship was doomed. She was headed for the shore as fast as possible, and in the confusion a little girl came up to one of the men who was just buckling on his money belt with his gold, and getting ready to jump into the sea, to save himself. "Oh, please, sir, can you swim?" she cried. "Yes, little one." "Then, oh, sir, won't you save me?" He saw that he could not save her and the

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gold, so he unbuckled his belt, dropped his money, and said, "Now, little one, put your arms about me, and hold fast." Then he jumped into the sea. After being almost drowned, he was washed on the beach with the little girl clinging to his neck. Jesus has dropped his heavenly gold, and given his life for us and he tells us: "Put your arms about my neck. Take hold of me." He puts his arms around you boys and girls when you let him, and saves you by his own sacrifice. So we sing that beautiful old hymn: "Safe in the arms of Jesus, Safe on his gentle breast." He is putting his arms around you to-day, though you can't see him, and he says, "My son, give me thy heart." Let us say:

"Jesus, take this heart of mine;
Make it pure and wholly thine.
Thou hast bled and died for me,
Let me henceforth live for thee."

CORN GROWERS

John 12:24—"Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit."

Object—An ear of corn.

This week a thousand boys and girls came into our city on a sight-seeing tour, sent on to us from the West, as a reward for having become very proficient in raising corn. It seems a queer thing to us boys and girls of the East that a whole long trip through the cities of the East should be given to boys and girls simply for raising corn. But these were the far-famed "Corn Club" boys and girls, organized into a club by the Government of the United States, under its Department of Agriculture. We all know what a wonderful and useful crop the corn crop in the United States is. We raise most of the corn for the world, besides having plenty for ourselves. And corn is one of the greatest necessities in the world of agriculture. It supports our cattle and supports a large proportion of us men and women and boys and girls. So it is rather important that the boys and girls of the coming generation of Americans should know

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something about how to plant and hoe and reap corn. It is amazing what some of those boys and girls have done. For the girls worked hard, too. In 1910 the average yield of corn in the United States was twenty-seven bushels to the acre. But that same year, by hard work and faithfulness, a boy named Moore in South Carolina on a small plot raised what would amount to two hundred and twenty-eight bushels per acre. Rather better than twenty-seven, wasn't it? In 1911 unfavorable weather brought the crops down to twenty-three bushels an acre. But in that year another boy, named Bennie Beeson, who lived in the South, raised two hundred and twenty-seven bushels per acre. Splendid!

And they had to work hard for it. They had to plant and to keep watching the soil to keep it right. One boy and his sister worked together, and the sister played the horse and dragged the little plow while the brother plowed his field. That was the kind of game that was worth while.

Now I want you to look at this fine ear of corn. I can't tell you how many kernels there are on it, but I think there are about a thousand. One day some one put a tiny kernel of corn, like this, in the ground, and by care and cultivation several of these wonderful ears grew. The kernel multiplied a thousandfold. I could plant these grains, and you could tell how many kernels would come if we planted all of them. I should plant only five of them to-

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gether. The farmers have a little rhyme about this planting that runs like this:

“One for the weevil,
One for the crow,
One for the cutworm,
And two to grow.”

But those two that escape the weevil and the crow and the cutworm must die before there can come these beautiful ears of grain. The corn must give its life for the life of the future plant.

Now, boys and girls, I want you to be planters, too. Corn-planters if you will, and yet planters of a better crop than even the precious golden corn that the poets talk of, and the merchants trade in, and that you like to eat served up in griddlecakes.

America leads the world in its corn-growing, but America leads the world, we believe, in its better crop of boys and girls. We ought to be just as anxious to know how to grow boys and girls as to know how to grow wheat and corn.

First, we ought to know how to plant them. For if they are not rightly planted they will never grow. Now Jesus, who was a great Gardener, and always planting things, showed us how to plant our lives, when he planted himself. This is what he is talking about in our text. “Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone.” Nothing grows that is not rightly planted somewhere, and nothing that is planted brings forth

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fruit until it dies. That seems strange, but it is true. Out of the seed that decays in the soil comes the green shoot of the new plant. So Jesus meant that if he did not die for us we could not grow up sweet and lovely and useful, in his likeness. And he also meant that unless we, too, are planted and die to ourselves, that is, unless we lose our selfishness, we cannot bring forth fruit. For he that would try to save his life shall lose it, but he that is willing to lose his life for Jesus' sake shall find it.

MOTHER'S DAY

Proverbs 23:22—"Despise not thy mother when she is old."

Object—Some picture of a mother. Whistler's famous picture of his mother is good.

My Dear Juniors:

This being the second Sunday in May, we are going to talk together about the real queen of the May. Last week perhaps you helped to crown a queen of the May. But let me tell you she was not the real queen. The real queen is she whose picture I hold up before you. We are to honor the greatest and best woman in all the wide world to-day. Now if I were to ask you bright boys and girls before me, "Who was the greatest man you ever heard of or ever knew?" you would say, perhaps, George Washington. And as you are loyal Americans you would be telling the truth. Or you would say Abraham Lincoln, and since you are good, loving little souls and love all men, black and white, and hate all wrong and slavery, you would be right.

Or perhaps you would do better still, and, since you are all good little disciples and Christians, you would say—Jesus—and you would be right. As

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soon as we are asked for the best man in the world, we think at once of some of these. But if I were to ask you, "Whom do you consider the best, the sweetest, the wisest, the greatest woman in the world?" you would answer at once and without hesitating a minute, "My mother." Yes, it is your mother, boy, and my mother, boy. The best and the sweetest and the wisest and the greatest is the mother that nursed us and cared for us, and to whom we owe so very much. And it is that mother, the real queen of the May, and the queen of the home, that we are to celebrate to-day, on "Mother's Day."

And there is only one of her. Most things in the world, as some one has said, come by twos and threes, by dozens and hundreds. Plenty of roses, stars, sunsets, rainbows, brothers and sisters, aunts and cousins, but only one mother in all the wide world!

Now let us take stock to-day of what we owe to this queen of our hearts. We owe her practically everything that we do not owe directly to God, for she is God's servant, sent down to care for us. There is a Jewish tradition, that because God could not be everywhere at once, he made mothers. We owe everything to our mothers. Of course we understand that we would not be here at all if it were not for the love of mother, and we would not be strong, or well, or able to do things, if it were not for mother.

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One day a little fellow who had done something for his mother put a bill for the work at her plate. When she came down in the morning to breakfast she read, "What mother owes John." And then followed a list of things like errands, and chores, and minding the baby, and sweeping the steps, and mowing the grass. Mother did not say much, but when John came in to supper he found at his plate a bill which read, "What John owes mother," and there followed such things as these: Birth, and health, and home, and food, and clothes, and schooling, and good times. John's face fell, and after a moment he put his arms about his mother's neck and said: "Mother, you needn't pay. Your bill is biggest."

Let us pay, then, what we owe. President Garfield, as you know, as his first act after his inauguration, stooped over and kissed his mother. West, the artist, used to say, "It was my mother's kiss that made me a painter." Think what mother's hands have done! I once heard a great preacher say that when he was called home to stand beside the body of his dear mother, gone to heaven, the first thing he looked at was not her face, though that was beautiful even in death, but her hands. And he noticed that her hands were wrinkled, and stained, and marred with the toil and the labor she had performed for him.

We must honor this queen by obedience and reverence. Like all true knights or ladies of a royal

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court we must yield homage to our queen. Sometimes we get the idea that it is rather "sissy" in us boys to be obedient and respectful to mother. And I am afraid the girls feel the same way. Oh, if you only knew how the disobedient ones have wished in after years that they had minded mother!

In our Midnight Mission Home in Germantown there are some very nice girls who forgot to love and obey their mothers as they ought to have done, until they got away from their mother's control. They became wild and fell into sin, so that they have had to be put where they cannot go out by themselves, and must be made to mind. I used to preach to those girls once a week and was never allowed to speak of mother or mother's love to them, because it made them all cry so hard that it spoiled the meeting. How they wished they had honored mother in the days that are gone!

Laura Richards tells us of a boy who was tied to his mother's apron strings for fear he might get into mischief. One day he thought he would break the strings and go out into the world by himself. So he tugged until the strings broke, and off he went. The fields were green and the woods inviting and the birds singing. But by and by the way began to be rough and uncomfortable, and the clouds gathered and it grew dark and he ran faster and faster, and suddenly, in the darkness, he fell over a precipice and would have been killed had it not been that a piece of his mother's apron

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string caught in the branch of a tree on the brink, and saved him. Don't be afraid of your mother's commandments.

Then we shall have only one mother—many friends, but only one mother. When she is gone we shall never get another. God gave her to us and he means that we shall love her all we can, and more than that, we will let her know it.

The newspapers tell us that recently a woman in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, was cured of spinal trouble by the hug of her boy. He had been away a long time, and when he came home he hugged her so hard that the broken piece of spine jumped into place and she began to get well. Boys, hug your mothers, love them, tell them so, and—you older boys with bald heads and gray hair—don't forget that you are their boys yet and that you owe them more than these little chaps owe their mothers.

“COMING OUT”

(A Sermon on Buds.)

Luke 2:49—“And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? knew ye not that I must be in my Father’s house?”

Object—A rosebud, or bud of any other flower.

My Dear Juniors:

I wish to talk to you to-day on the subject of “buds.” What a lovely thing a bud is—so full of an exquisite beauty, so full of mystery hidden behind its petals, and so full, better still, of wondrous possibilities. How tenderly Mother Nature has wrapped this bud up in its beautiful jacket, and how glorious it will appear when it unfolds its petals and becomes a full-blown rose! Now this is not the season of the year for the kind of buds I hold in my hand. However, this bud suggests another variety still more interesting, and of far more wonderful possibilities. I am thinking of the “society buds,” as we call them, that are blooming out this fall season. And they are called “buds,” because, like the buds of this rose, they are “coming out.”

And what is coming out? Well, it is a very

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pretty process, like the unfolding of the petals of this flower. One day the young girl becomes, in the sight of her friends, a young woman, and her mother thinks it is time that she is introduced to all her friends out in the big social world, which I hope you boys and girls won't get to know for a good long time. The house is filled with flowers and music and feasting, and the sweet young "bud" of a girl stands with her mother under a bower of roses—looking for all the world like a rose herself—with a big bunch of flowers in her arms, and a glow of happiness on her cheeks. Her mother introduces her to all the many guests who come to wish her joy upon entering into that age when she can enter her name on all the "calling lists," and be "invited out" to dinners, and teas, and dances, and what not. And they call this "coming out" into society.

Now I am thinking of another "coming out." It was the kind of coming-out party that Jesus had when he was only twelve years of age. You will perhaps remember that when he was just twelve, his father and mother took him up to Jerusalem with them to "present him" to Jewish society. For at that age a boy of the Jews "came of age," as we say, and was acknowledged as a member of society. And the place where he was presented was the temple—God's house. Perhaps you remember that when they started home they missed him from the party, and on going back a day's journey found

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him in the temple talking to the rabbis and asking them questions. When they rebuked him for staying behind, he said, “Knew ye not that I must be in my Father’s house?” meaning, of course, God’s house. That is, Jesus realized that this was the day he “came out” for God. He was to be known after that as a servant of God. How lovely that boy Jesus must have looked, standing in that temple, coming out for God.

Then there was in the Old Testament times a little boy that “came out” at a much younger age than Jesus. He was only a tiny chap, but his mother thought it was time for him to be “brought out,” so she took him up to the house of God, and presented him there. He began his “coming out” by trimming the lamps of the house of God. Of course you are going to tell me, “Why, I know him; his name was Samuel.” And there is also the story of that other little boy who had a coming-out party which Jesus arranged for him, when he took him up in his lap and, gathering his disciples about him, introduced the little fellow to them all, and said, “Unless you old fellows get to be like this little boy, you can’t even get into heaven.” I think he was a mite embarrassed, but oh, how proud he was!

And I recall another little chap who was born to be a king some day, whose coming-out party I saw at Windsor Castle several years ago. It was the confirmation of the Prince of Wales, the future

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King of England—his coming out into the fellowship of the English Church, whose guardian and protector he swore to be. And as I saw him riding in his beautiful carriage to the chapel at Windsor, I thought of that other little royal person, a little girl who was afterwards to be England's most loved monarch, who had a coming-out party when she was sixteen, and came into the Church. When the Archbishop of Canterbury was telling her of the great responsibility of being a representative of the King of kings, she put her young head on her mother's shoulder and cried.

Now I think that this is the sort of a "coming-out" affair that you girls and boys, too, ought to be looking forward to: the coming out for Christ in the society we call the Christian society—the Church. And this is the kind of coming out your parents ought to plan for you, for it will be the one greatest event of your lives. I wish fathers and mothers were as anxious for this as for the other. It was once said of a certain woman that she had introduced her daughters to society, but had never yet introduced them to Jesus. John Randolph, of Virginia, used to say he would have been an unbeliever but for the fact that his mother took his hand and put it into the hand of Christ and said, "My son, this is your Saviour; my Saviour, this is your child." That was an introduction worth while.

Now here's the story: Little Anna, three years

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old, had just risen from repeating the Lord's Prayer at her mother's knee. "But, mother, you have forgotten my soul," said she, as her mother was about to lay her in bed.

"Why, what do you mean, Anna?" said her mother.

"Why——

'Now I lay me down to sleep
I pray the Lord my soul to keep'——

we haven't said that, mother."

That's right, boys and girls. Don't let mother forget your soul, when she is doing all she can for your bodies and your minds.

WHAT THE FLAG MEANS

(Flag Day Sermon.)

Psalm 20:5—"In the name of our God we will set up our banners."

Object—"The Stars and Stripes."

My Dear Young Patriots:

On this Sunday before the "glorious Fourth," I have brought as our object the familiar old flag we all love. This week we shall be unfurling it to the breeze amid the sound of cannon and bells and the voices of you children, singing, "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Flags are very ancient affairs, and here we find David telling about setting up their "banners" in the name of the Lord—which is the only way to set them up. But this "Old Glory" is the oldest flag among the great flags of the world. It was adopted, as every Philadelphia boy and girl knows, in 1777, and the Union Jack of England was not adopted till 1801, the flag of France in 1794, the Spanish flags in 1785, and the others still later.

Now the flag is so dearly loved and so bravely guarded because it represents a great idea. It stands for a great truth; yes, for a number of truths.

WHAT THE FLAG MEANS

The flag means, in the first place, the people and the institutions of our dear land. When the flag was first made, every star and every bar stood for a state of the Union. So ever star stands to-day. And so also the old flag stands for every man and woman and boy and girl in the whole United States. I once saw a beautiful flag made entirely out of precious stones, red rubies, and white pearls, and blue lapis lazuli, and it shone with a wondrous glory, like the glory of our nation, which is made up of different people, each one of whom adds to or takes from its glory. So the old flag represents to us the people in the land.

What is our country? Not what we see on the map, but the people in your home, and the boys and girls in your school, and the huckster at your door, and the policeman on the corner and the mayor in the city hall. During the Civil War, when one of the New England regiments was in danger of being captured, the soldiers cut up their flags carefully. Each man took a piece, and hid it about his person, and kept it till the close of the war. Then when they came home they carefully sewed the pieces together again. So each of you boys and girls is a part of the nation, and you keep with you always the parts of that flag and what it stands for.

Then the flag stands for your safety as a citizen. Under that flag all the power of the armies of our land will be used to protect you. How happy

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a man feels in a foreign land to see that flag flying! To-day I picked up a missionary magazine and read that two of our missionaries in China had taken that flag and a white one with it, and had gone out into the country between the armies of the Manchus and of the new Republic to try to make peace between them, and that they had felt not the slightest fear so long as that flag was over them.

A dear little boy who had heard that the flag would protect those that wrapped themselves in it, on the night when the new baby came to town and he had to sleep alone away from mother, took the flag with him and hung it on the top of his bed. How happy should we be that we live in the land where we are able to trust in the flag, because the flag means the safety of all the citizens!

Then, lastly, the flag stands for the spirit of America—the spirit of liberty and freedom, which we who have always had it do not appreciate. It is the spirit that gives us all a chance, no matter who or what we are. It is a spirit that every boy and girl ought to cultivate, for it makes us kind and considerate to those who come from foreign lands to share it with us. Miss Slattery tells us of two little boys who came into her school office in Boston recently. One was Thomas Gallagher, an Irishman, and the other was Antonio Lagretti, Italian. Antonio was crying, and Thomas did not look very comfortable. When they came in, their witnesses said, “Miss Slattery, Thomas took away

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Antonio's flag and Antonio punched his face." Miss Slattery said, "Why, Antonio, whatever made you do that?" He said, "I had to punch his face, I can't help punch his face." "But," said she, "no boy has to punch another's face." Then Antonio answered: "I have to punch his face. My father he giva me dis flag and he say, 'Dis is flag day in your school, Antonio. Take dis flag and march up and down de street and show it to your teacher.' An' it was a big silka one, too. I walka up and down da street and Thomas he say, 'Gi' me da flag,' an' I say, 'I won't,' an' he say, 'Gi' me da flag, you ol' Dago.' An' I say, 'I won't, it's my flag,' and he say, 'It's not you' flag; you no Americano, you Dago.' " And then, looking up into Miss Slattery's face, he asked, "Miss Slattery, I am Americano?" "Yes," said she, "and so is Thomas, but we have different names for Americans. Thomas is Irish-American, and you are Italian-American."

And, smiling, Antonio went away with his flag gripped in his hand, saying: "Ha! Ha! Antonio Dago-American."

That little Italian had caught the spirit of our great America, and I hope that when you see "Old Glory" you will always remember that it stands for giving every boy and girl a chance, and will always give many of your pennies to the Sunday-school Board of the church to help these little foreigners to know about Jesus.

THREE-STORY HOUSES

Hebrews 3:6—"Whose house are we."

Object—A toy house.

My Dear Juniors:

This is moving time. The storage vans are everywhere, and "To Let" signs are being taken down and put up with great rapidity just now. If you and I were looking for a house, I am wondering just what kind of house we should seek. Should we be content with one just cellar-or basement-high? Or should we be satisfied with a house with two stories, or with three?

Some one has said that every man lives in a three-story house. The first story is partly underground. Here he eats and drinks. He never goes upstairs. This is what we call the "Physical House," and some men never get to living any higher than the basement.

The second story rises above the first. From its windows one can see better and farther and the air is purer. This is the place where the man does his studying. Here he has his library and keeps his books. And this they call the "Mental House."

Then there is the third story above the others,

THREE-STORY HOUSES

Here the view of heaven and earth is richer, and here there is a purer air. One can see better the sun and moon and stars. One can almost see into heaven from this third story. And this we call the "Spiritual House." Here the man loves, and here he kneels to pray.

God has given to each one of us this three-story house to live in. He expects us to make good use of it, and to use all three stories, each for its own purpose. He expects us to take care of our bodies, so that they will be well and strong. He expects us to make good use of our minds, so that we can think and know and understand. Then he expects us to take the very best of care of our souls, for they are our meeting place with him. While he goes with us all through the house, it is in the soul that we meet him and learn to know him.

Now the text to-day tells us that Jesus Christ is Lord of the house—"Whose house are we." Now I am wondering if Jesus to whom we really belong should suddenly come back to visit us at any time, what use he would find us making of this house of ours. Would he find the basement soiled and stained and filled with unclean things? Would he find the second story filled with impure and selfish thoughts? Would he find the third story, the spirit, neglected and unused, because we have not kept it in readiness for his companionship? And I am wondering if Jesus, the Lord of our house, should come back suddenly to visit us at any time,

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where he would find us living. I am wondering in just what portion of his house we would entertain him.

Now there are men and women, and boys and girls, who live always and only in the basement. They eat and drink and sleep, and never go up to the floor where the library is. And there are others who, though they live on the first floor and go down to eat in the basement, never get up to the third story where the great view is, and the pure air. They leave it to dust and cobwebs. Then there are those have gone up to the third story, and when they have learned the delight of living there they have never been willing to live entirely on the second and first floor again. The best place in the house for them now is that third story, the spiritual part of the life.

If the great Lord of the house should come house-hunting to-day and want to be your guest, what would he find in your house? And where would he find you spending most of your time?

I think he would like to find the whole house in order and being used in the right way, but he would be especially anxious to find you in the top floor to welcome him.

You will remember that when Jesus wished to eat the Last Supper with his disciples, he sent them to make ready an "upper room." And I think he did this because it was quieter and more sacred in that upper room than in any other portion of the

THREE-STORY HOUSES

house. It was out of the way of the pots and pans and the noise of the street. It was a room where he could meet just them, alone. Martha wanted Jesus to come and visit her in the dining room, and was vexed with Mary because Mary wanted to have Jesus in the upper room where she could be alone with him, and hear him speak to her. And there are some people that want Jesus to come into the second story where the library is, where they can talk to him about theology (if you boys and girls know what that is). And there are others, like Mary, who want to have him visit them in that room next to the sky, where one can look right up to God, and can see the stars and the mountains. And I think that it is in this last room, or story, that Jesus the Lord of our house likes best to come.

How shall we furnish that room? Very simply. I think there ought to be an altar there, where we can kneel to pray. I think there ought to be a Bible there upon the table. I think there ought to be a table there, at which to feast. But we do not have to provide the feast, for the Lord of the house himself brings that.

In the refectory of San Marco in Florence there is a picture of St. Dominic seated with his monks at a table on which there is no bread, asking a blessing over the empty plates. In the background of the picture one sees angels moving about, bringing the bread to fill the empty plates. So when we

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keep house in the upper story of our house, Christ comes in and brings all that we need.

"Behold," he says, "I stand at the door and knock: if any man . . . open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

So I think you will agree with me that it is better to live on the top floor.

SHIBBOLETH OR SIBBOLETH?

Judges 12:6—"Say now Shibboleth; and he said Sibboleth."

Object—This motto placed over the Ten Commandments in a country church: "PRSVRYPRFCTMNVKPTHSP RCPTSTN."

Now, boys and girls, here is a hard one. Can you read this? For two hundred years this motto remained unread in a country church in England. No one had caught the key to open the riddle. Then some bright boy or girl, I presume, was looking at it, and, doing better still, observing it carefully—for remember that we don't see things with one look—when he discovered that all these letters were consonants. He puzzled his head until he came to see that there was just one vowel, one common little vowel, that would solve the whole vexed problem for him. He supplied it where he thought it would do the most good, and, Presto, here we have a very fitting motto indeed to put over the great law of God. "Persevere ye perfect men, ever keep these precepts ten."

So you see how easy it is when we have the right vowel put in its right place. Now while this motto

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is a lesson in itself, since it teaches that every man who would be perfect must keep the law of God, there is another lesson I wish to bring to you in this motto. It is the value of that little letter "E." Not much time is taken to make or to speak it, but without it this whole sentence is the most foolish gibberish. Little letters, left in or left out, make a vast difference in the meaning of things in this big world. Some years ago a government stenographer, in copying a document for the government, left out a comma, which made the sentence read wrongly, and cost the United States over one million dollars. A single letter out of place, in a competitive examination, cost a young man a position in a New England college.

Now the story from which we take our text is interesting. The men of Gilead held the fords of the Jordan and would not let any Ephraimite pass over. In order to test each man they said to him, "Now, say 'Shibboleth.'" The Ephraimites could not pronounce the "h," so said "Sibboleth," instead of "Shibboleth." If a man failed in this test he was killed. So you see that the Ephraimites' lives hung upon their ability to say that very small letter, "h." How they would have practiced saying "h" if they had known!

So we see, Juniors, that your small things count. Truly, all small things count. Little things are always necessary. A little bolt, a little letter, a little pin, a little word. How Ali Baba would have re-

SHIBBOLETH OR SIBBOLETH?

joiced if he had been able to remember that little word that opened the cave when once he was in and the door shut! You remember "Open sesame," don't you? A cricket once saved an army, and a little girl's feet, flashing in a brook, made her the mother of William the Conqueror.

Now let every boy and girl get into the right place where God meant them to be, and stay there. Don't shirk. There is a place for every one of you, though you may not be able to see it now.

And if our loving heavenly Father has given us each a place to fill, and a duty for him to be done, that duty will never be done unless we do it, because as soon as we let some one else do it, it becomes their duty and not ours.

And we never know how important we are to God until we fail him. Some days ago the letter "a" on my typewriter got out of order and would not print. Every word that had "a" in it was spoiled. I never knew there were so many "a's" in the whole world as there seemed to be needed in my letters. I simply had to have it repaired before I could go on. So, Juniors, be careful and do not fail the great and good God our Father when he needs you.

LESSONS FROM MY FOUNTAIN PEN

Matthew 12: 37—"By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

Object—A fountain pen.

My Dear Juniors:

Do you realize what wonderful things words are? A thought springs up in my brain, and I desire to give that thought to you; there is a movement in the vocal chords of my throat, and then there is a responsive movement in your ears, and the trick is done. A little sound, laden with truth, has been the messenger, and you have now what I had. And you have been made better or worse, happier or unhappier, by that word. Perhaps it may change your young life. Who knows? By these little words nations have been saved or lost, battles won or lost, and characters made or unmade. And then there is another curious thing about words—it is so difficult to get hold of them and draw them back when once spoken.

Once there was a woman who was known as a common scold. It used to be the custom to punish common scolds. So this woman was told to take a goose and pluck its feathers, letting them fly

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to the winds, while walking between two towns. Then when the second town had been reached, and the feathers all gone, she was told to go back over the way and pick them all up, as further punishment. Of course you realize that she couldn't do this, and so learned the lesson that her angry words once uttered could never be recalled. "There are two things that never return," says the Eastern proverb, "the sped arrow, and the spoken word."

Now my lesson to you to-day is from my fountain pen. I have noticed that when the ink in my pen flows most freely, the pen is most apt to be nearly empty. Now I think this pen is like some boys and girls I know. Their words flow most freely when they have little to say that is worth saying. Did you ever listen to water coming out of a jug? You will notice that the less there is in the jug, the more noise the water makes in coming out. That is the way with some of us, I fear. I have found that there are some ministers who always "holler" loudest in their preaching when they have least to say.

Our text says that our words justify us, or condemn us. That is, they gain for us in the heavenly Father's house either reward or punishment. Therefore we should be careful just what those words are which we say, and remember that the less we have to say the less we ought to speak. Let us be careful never to speak hurriedly and without thought. King David realized the danger of too

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careless speaking, and he said, "I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me." He saw that it was best to rein in his words, lest they went out without their rider—"thought"—and got him into trouble, like a runaway horse. So we want, above all, to make our words count.

Ex-President Roosevelt used to tell a funny story about an old colored man in the South. As he was coming down the road one day he was asked how he was doing and how his neighbors were. "I'm doin' tol'ble well," he replied, "an' so is my neighbors, 'cept Old Zero. He don't git along nohow."

"Zero, uncle? Didn't know you had a neighbor of that name."

"Well, sir, Zero mayn't be his real name, but dats w'at we calls him, 'cause whatever he says don't count."

You Juniors know what zero is worth in arithmetic. I wonder if there are any boys and girls here that now and then say things that "don't count"?

Here is a motto for you: "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Jehovah, my rock, and my redeemer."

CANDLES, NEW AND OLD

Matthew 5 : 16—"Let your light shine before men."

Objects—Two candles. One new; the other half burned.

My Dear Juniors :

I think that God must be very fond of light, for in the very beginning of all things, he said, "Let there be light," and beautiful and glorious light flashed out over the world which had been lying in utter darkness. Then when it was time for the Saviour of men to come into the world, which had become dark and terrible through the sin that was in it, he said by the mouth of Jesus his son, "I am the light of the world." And when Jesus had died, and passed on to us the commission, to make the world bright and shining by our Christian lives, he left us these marvelous words in the fifth chapter of Matthew, in the midst of his wonderful Sermon on the Mount: "Ye are the light of the world. . . . Let your light shine."

Now I have here with me two light-makers—candles. In Proverbs, the Bible says, "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord" (A.V.). One of these candles is new and only burned down a little. The other is burned halfway down. Which

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of these two light-makers will be of the most service to me, that which is new, or that which is half burned down? You all answer at once and with one breath that the new one will last the longer and be of more service. You are saying it so fast that I can hardly distinguish what you say, and you can scarcely get the words out quick enough. Of course the new candle will last the longer.

Now, I shall let this large new candle represent the life of you boys and girls, and this little burned one the life of one of the older men or women like myself, whose life is more than half over. Which of them will give more light? You say both of them will give the same. And you are right. The boy or the girl can let this light shine as brightly, and as strongly, and as far, as any grown person can. Often the lights of the boys and girls shine much farther. But which will shine the longer? Of course the large one will.

The time, then, Juniors, to give ourselves to Jesus and to begin to shine for him is when we are like the big candle, new, and young, and in our flower of youth and not when we are half burned down and old. The time to confess Jesus and begin to shine for him is when life is before us. "Remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth, before the evil days come, and the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." God always wants the "first fruits" of our lives, as he asked them of the children of Israel.

CANDLES, NEW AND OLD

Down in the basements of our big department stores we can often buy things much more cheaply than we can on the first floor, because in the basement they sell what we call "seconds," things not quite so nice as those upstairs. But remember that God does not want "seconds." Abel brought to God, we are told, the "firstlings of his flock," and so God accepted his sacrifice, and did not accept that of Cain. The king of Babylon wanted young men, and not old men, and so he took the brave boy, Daniel, and his associates to his court to be brought up in his service. God wants the younger lives now because they will last so much longer.

How do we treat Jesus, then, when we burn out our best young days in selfishness, and in living for the world, and then give Jesus the candle when it is more than half burned down?

Here is a story from Mrs. Ballington Booth, who has done so much for prisoners. She says that when she was a little girl in her father's home, they used to play with the Noah's ark on Sundays, and offer up a sacrifice of the animals as Noah did. But she tells us that they always picked out the broken animals to sacrifice. How like that is our behavior to Jesus! We so often give him our worst instead of our best.

The time to light the candle, then, is when it is new, and the time to let your light shine for Jesus is when you are young. Will you give him yourself to-day?

THE RESTORED FLAG

(Fourth of July Sermon.)

Object—An American Flag.

My Dear Young Patriots:

How many of you ever put together a jig-saw puzzle? It is great fun to pick out the pieces and find their places and see the picture grow. But I wonder still more if any of you ever put a flag together. Not a new flag, made of nice clean strips of bunting and sewed on a machine, but an old flag, dirty and ragged and battle-scarred and black with the smoke of battle. And more than that, this flag of which I am to tell you was not put together by the same man, but by many different men, each bringing a piece, and having it sewed in.

Well, it was this way. During one of the engagements of the Civil War, a Massachusetts regiment was about to be captured by the Confederates. They saw that all hope of escape was gone, and they knew that if they were captured the old flag which they had carried and defended so long would be taken, too. So they determined to preserve it. They took it from its staff and tore it

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into bits, each man taking a bit and concealing it somewhere about him. They were taken prisoners and for a long time were in various prisons, scattered here and there. But each man preserved his piece of the flag until the war ceased and they were sent home. Then they got together and each man that had his piece still with him took it to the armory, where they fitted them together as best they could, and behold, they had the old flag safe, though not so sound as it had been. What a joy to have kept "Old Glory" together.

Now the flag, as we well know, stands for the nation. And we also know that the nation is not the number of men and women in a land, nor the number of fine houses and stores and churches and public buildings, nor the number of battleships and soldiers and sailors. The nation is really the principles for which the people stand. It is made up of what you do and what I do, and what you think and what I think, and what you say and what I say. These are the results of what we believe. So the nation is, after all, what you believe and what I believe. The flag stands for what you believe and what I believe, and what our fathers and grandfathers believed. Yes, and it will be made up of what our grandchildren believe, if we have any, and, of course, most of us will.

Now what we want to do in this Junior congregation on this Fourth of July is to get your minds filled with the things that have been believed al-

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ways by our forefathers and by us, so that if the day ever should come when this nation of ours should be captured by sin and Satan, or by men who did not follow truth, you boys and girls could take these truths which we now believe, and put them together again to make a new and better nation. We want you to put them away in the safest place in your hearts, so that you can hand them down to your children's children when you come to die.

Let us look, then, at a few of these pieces of that thing for which the flag stands.

First, there is love for God. This is the biggest piece of all. Our country was founded upon love for God, and if that piece was lost we could never get the flag together as it once was. Our forefathers at Plymouth made love to God the first stripe in the nation's flag.

Then there is, second, love of country. This is a close second. It is almost as important.

"Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!"

You all know, I think, Mr. Hale's story of "The Man Without a Country," and what a terribly sad plight he was in.

Then there is love of home. This is next to love of country. We want every one of you to be able to say honestly,

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"East, west—Home's best."

"Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

For home is the seat of all that is worth while in a nation. You can't have good citizens without good children, and you can't have good children unless you have good homes.

Then there is love of liberty. This longing to be free is just as much a part of our nature as it is of the bird's. He hates the iron cage and so do we. But we must remember that it is not always the fetter and the chain and the dungeon that keep us prisoners. It is as often bad habits and selfishness.

Then there is love of men. It is one of our chief glories that we, as a people, love all men. We make no distinctions of race and color, and though we like some colors apparently better than others, we are always ready to love a man who shows that he is a man, no matter what the color of his skin or the accent of his speech. America is always unselfish in her desire to help the whole world, and we never want our boys and girls to grow selfish.

There is our love of law. In these days we sometimes forget that. But what you boys need to preserve carefully is that piece of the flag upon which is written "laws." The boy that transgresses the smallest law he knows is not keeping the flag complete.

Then there is love of truth. George Washing-

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ton hated a lie, and so do all honest Americans. We are usually a nation paying its debts. We are usually a nation that means what it says. And we always want to be this.

And, best of all, there is the love of worship to God. We are a nation of churches and of religion. We always must be. With religion goes our prosperity. The nation that fears God shall prosper. "Blessed is that nation whose God is Jehovah." And blessed is that nation whose temple doors are always open, and whose people are always praying.

So, Juniors, we want you to-day to keep those pieces of the flag of our nation in your hearts. Some day you may need to take them out and put them together.

A LESSON IN CHINESE

I Samuel 16: 18—"A mighty man of valor, . . . and prudent in speech."

Object—Some Chinese characters.

My Dear Juniors:

I have in my hand to-day some curious-looking letters which I suppose, in these days of our interest in China, you will guess at once are Chinese letters, or characters. This is the way they read in the new republic of China. A student will learn about five thousand of these characters before he becomes a good reader. There are plenty of reasons for thanking God that we are Americans, and this is one of them—that we do not have to learn these curious things before we can read.

Now the funny part of these letters is that they stand for words, and that each of these words can have seven or eight different sounds. If I say "shu," and let my voice run downhill like a sled, it means one thing, and if I say "shu," and make it climb uphill again, it means quite another. The missionaries get very much mixed when they are learning this difficult language. For example, I knew of one who wanted to preach on the text, "My son, give me thy heart." When he got

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through—after much laughter, which he couldn't understand—he found that he had been preaching a long sermon on, “My son, give me thy dog.” So you see that in Chinese they really speak twice while they are speaking only once. This sounds strange, does it not? Yet that is just what some of us—yes, all of us—are doing every time we open our mouths to speak at all.

Like the Chinese, we speak once in saying the word, and again in the tone we use when we say the word. If I say to a dog, “Come here, Fido,” in one kind of tone, he will wag his big tail and come jumping all over me. But if I say, “Come here, Fido!” in a tone like thunder, he will put that tail between his legs and run away. Here, then, I really spoke twice, for I said, “Come,” but I meant, “I don't want you at all,” or “If you come, I mean to punish you.” And one day when mother said, “I'd rather you would not play with that Tom Hollister, my boy,” you said, “Why not, mother?” Now you really spoke twice, and the tone you used set you down as a pleasant and obedient boy, who was rather anxious and inquisitive to see what was the matter with Tom, or a disagreeable and disobedient boy, who did not want to obey his mother. For you said, “Why not?” pleasantly, or you said, “W-h-y—n-o-t?” drawling it out most disagreeably, with a sulk in the last word.

Now in our text David was found to be a “man of valor, . . . and prudent of speech,” so they took

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him in to play in order to quiet King Saul when he was angry.

"Prudent of speech." That's the kind of boys we want now—boys who can control their speech, so that the tones will please and not offend others. God said once to Israel, "My speech shall distil as the dew." He was going to scold them, but he was going to do it in a way that was as gentle as dew-fall.

But here's a story from Laura Richards:

"Little boy," said the nurse one day, "you would be far better at work. Your garden needs weeding sadly. Go now and weed it."

"But I don't want to," thought the boy. "I can't do it," he said.

"Yes, you can," said the nurse.

"Well, I won't," said the boy.

"But you must," said the nurse.

By and by his mother came into the room. "What is the matter?" she asked, for he looked like a three-days' rain.

"Nurse told me to go weed my garden," said the boy.

"Oh," said the mother, "what fun it will be. I love to weed gardens, and it is such a fine day. May I go and help?"

"Why, yes, of course," said the boy, and they had a fine time weeding.

I think it was the way the mother spoke twice that brought him round, don't you?

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"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold," said the Wise Man. Let us learn to control our tones, for that is what makes us pleasant or unpleasant. So much we learn from the Chinese to-day. That you may remember it, I am going to give each of you a little flag of the new Chinese republic.

THE SAFE-DEPOSIT BOX ¹

Romans 6: 13—"But present yourselves unto God."

Object—A locked tin box, with a smaller locked box within the other.

My Dear Juniors:

Have any of you ever been inside a safe-deposit vault in a trust company or bank—that great, fire-proof and burglar-proof room where all the little safe-deposit boxes are arranged in rows one above the other, and where mother and father store their valuables when they go away for the summer, or keep their bonds and papers? Some days ago I happened to go into one of these, from curiosity, and the keeper told me that although each of these many boxes about the walls could be opened by one key which he possessed, called the "master key," each of them contained another little box inside of it, for the holding of the valuables which could be opened only by the key of the person that hired it. He could open the box for Mrs. Smith and get out her little box, but she would have to take the little box and, using her own private key, open that for herself.

¹ The suggestion for this sermon came from Rev. R. H. Gage, of Wenonah, N. J.

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Now I have brought for your object this morning two of these boxes, the outer and the inner. The outer I can open with my key, but the inner can be opened only with the key of the owner, which I do not have. Now all this has a very much needed lesson for us boys and girls. As I see it, the outer box appears to me to represent all that our Father in heaven has done to make the way to our hearts easy—all that he has done to open the way for our salvation, and to fellowship with him. And the great “master key” that has opened the way is God’s love. He opened it for us by the death of Jesus, who died that we might have our sins forgiven and find our way back to God. He opened it for us by giving us all these “means of grace,” as we call them, the Bible, the Church, the Sunday school, Christian parents and loving teachers. He has opened wide the outer box.

But here is this second inner box. That is your own being. You alone have the key that will open that. And the unfortunate part about it is that you can keep it shut even from God.

There is a little key, called “will,” that alone can open it. In that inner box, guarded by your will, is your heart. Your heavenly Father wants that for himself. He says, “My son, give me thy heart.” He has given Jesus, his Son, to open that outer box, but nothing he can do can make you open that inner box if you do not want to. He has so arranged it. That is why Paul tells us,

THE SAFE-DEPOSIT BOX

"Present yourselves" (that is, your wills) "unto God." Let him have the key of your will. Say, "Lord, take my will, and open my heart." Say:

"Jesus, take this heart of mine,
Make it pure and wholly thine."

But our self-will and unyieldingness can keep that little box always locked against God. Here is a story:

"Some years ago, a man named Samuel Holmes was in jail in Frankfort, Kentucky, under sentence for murder.

"An old schoolfellow, Lucien Young, visited him and undertook to get for him a pardon and release, believing that he would lead a new life. Some time before, Young had risked his own life in rescuing several persons from a wreck, and the legislature had made formal recognition and record of his great bravery and heroism. Governor Blackburn remembered Young's noble self-sacrifice, and for his sake determined to exercise executive clemency and signed the pardon for which he pleaded. Young was permitted to be the bearer of the document to the governor of the prison, but first went to the prison cell to announce to his friend the good news.

"Before telling him that he had the pardon in his pocket that was to make his friend a free man, he said, after some general conversation, 'Sam, suppose you were turned loose to-morrow, what would you do?' The convict quickly and angrily replied,

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‘The first thing I would do would be to go to Lancaster and kill Judge Owsley, who condemned me, and then kill the man who was the principal witness against me.’ Without another word, Young mournfully left the cell and returned the pardon to the governor. It was torn in fragments and the murderer was left to his doom.”

Let us never be so obstinate and hard as this poor criminal. As Paul says, let us yield ourselves unto God.

PAUL'S FOUR MEN¹

I Corinthians 4:3, 4—"With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment; yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing against myself; . . . but he that judgeth me is the Lord."

Object—One of those Japanese dolls that has a nest of smaller dolls, one within the other. Use four of them.

My Dear Juniors:

If you were asked how many boys and girls were in our "Junior congregation" to-day, I presume you would say twenty or thirty, but I should differ with you. For, though perhaps you do not realize it, there are really in our church this morning, not twenty or thirty boys and girls, but eighty or one hundred and twenty. How do I multiply them? No, I haven't any magic box into which to put them as you have seen the magicians do, to multiply flags and what not. All I have to do is to count, as Paul did, each boy and girl four times. There are in reality four boys or four girls in each one of you. This is what Paul was trying to tell us in the words I have chosen for our text. Listen, then, to what he says: Judged of you—that's one; judged of man's judgment—that's two;

¹This sermon was suggested by Dr. Stalker's sermon on the same subject.

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judged of myself—that's three; judged of God—that's four.

So Paul is right; there are four men or women in each of us. And I want to tell you about them for a moment. Let me take this little Japanese doll as our object lesson.

First, then, here is the first boy or girl. The outside doll is the boy the world sees. Judged of man's judgment. We are all so judged. Every day the world about you is forming its opinion of you. In the neighborhood where you live they have already sized you up. You are either a good boy or a bad boy, an honest boy or a dishonest boy, you are a hoodlum or you are a gentleman. You can't live in a neighborhood two days before the neighborhood has judged you. Now their judgment is sometimes better than you are, and it is sometimes much worse, because the world can see only the outside boy or girl, and, of course, it can't tell what is on the inside.

Second, there is the next little man that lives in the inside of the first. (Remove the outside shell and disclose the second doll within it). This little man is the one your friends see. Of course they can see much better than the outside world, for they know you pretty well, much better than the world. There is an old story in the Greek religion which illustrates this. Luna, the goddess of the moon, is said to have loved a mortal man. As she sailed across the sky at night in her silvery beauty, she

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looked down upon him as at other mortals, and he looked up at her as other mortals did. But when midnight was past and the world was asleep, he still watched and looked up at her alone; and then she turned to him that side of her beautiful orb which is always turned away from the world, and disclosed such dazzling splendors as mortal eye had never seen before. So when we have a friend, we show to him or her the inner side, the better side of our life. But Paul didn't care so much what even his friend thought of him, for there was still another man inside of Paul.

So we have, third, the man or boy or girl that we ourselves see, when we look within ourselves. This is a different kind of fellow from either of the others, because we know ourselves better than either the world or our friends can know us. Sometimes we quite like the self which we see, this third little fellow, and sometimes we dislike him most sincerely. Sometimes we approve all he does, and sometimes we do not approve at all what he does. Sometimes we say, "If my friends knew me they would not care for me at all; perhaps they would not want to associate with me," or sometimes we say, "If father and mother really knew me, they would have more patience with me." Now Paul says that he could not judge himself because he knew nothing against himself. We are all so blind to our own faults that we cannot rightly judge ourselves.

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Then we come to the fourth man. He is the fellow that God sees. This is a far different fellow from the boy or girl that the world or our friends or ourselves see. No one of us knows all about even himself. But God does. He sees everything and forgets nothing. He knows not only all the good and bad we have actually done, but all we may some day do. "He knoweth our frame," the Bible says. Jesus, we are told, "knew what was in man." So God knows all about us.

What must we learn, then? That it does not matter so much what people think of us, or even what we think of ourselves. But it matters most terribly what God thinks. Here is a story that Dr. Stalker tells us:

A young musical composer was bringing out his first great composition. As the theme was being played the house rang with applause, and, as he stood above the orchestra hearing his own ideas so wonderfully played by the musicians, he was inclined to feel proud. Suddenly his eye lighted on the great musical master who had taught him all he knew, and his heart began to tremble more than ever whenever that great master would smile or frown, to show he was pleased or displeased.

So we ought to live. God is our great Master and we ought to be concerned only as to whether he is pleased or displeased with our lives.

LITTLE BURGLARS

Exodus 20: 15—"Thou shalt not steal."

Object—A dark lantern.

My Dear Juniors :

I am wondering if you all can recite the text to-day if I tell you that it is the eighth of the Ten Commandments. (The Juniors recite it together.) Very good. Now, this object to-day is one of those gruesome things associated with the deeds of darkness, about which we do not care very much. It suggests to us our friend, "Jimmie Valentine, the sentimental crook," of whom we sing. It is, as we already guess, a dark lantern, used by such unfriendly members of society as "burglars." Now a "burglar," according to the dictionary, is a man who breaks in with intent to steal, and the burglary consists not in stealing alone, but in the "breaking in" and stealing. It's the breaking in that makes the burglar. He is therefore considered one of the most dangerous of men, and it is because of this breaking into the home, which every man considers his one safe retreat, that we give the burglar such scanty mercy and send him to prison.

Now I suppose that there are boys and girls here

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to-day who might be very much afraid of burglars, and yet who are not afraid that they may be themselves burglars. Yes, I see some of you looking surprised already. "What!" you say. "I, a burglar?" Yes, you, John and Tom and Mary and Anna. You have been caught "breaking and entering" many a time, and if you had come before old "Mrs. Bedone-by-as-you-did," of whom Mr. Kingsley tells us in his "Water Babies," you would have been sent to some kind of state prison, too.

Now and then you will read in the papers of some poor little fellow, who has never been taught better, who breaks into some gentleman's house, and, having been caught, is sent to the reform school. It has made you feel badly, but you yourself have gone on breaking and entering just the same. But I must stop speaking to you in riddles and tell you the truth. When they catch a burglar, they take his picture for the "rogues' gallery," and I am going to let you see some of the pictures of the little "boy and girl burglars" whom I have caught.

This first boy was caught red-handed in the parlor of his mother's home. A friend of his mother's came in to see her one day, and while she was busy telling her some very important news about the missionary meeting at the church, he broke right into the conversation just as roughly as a burglar would jimmy up a window to get into your home. "Say, mother, can I go down town with Bill? His mother gave him ten cents and he is goin' to treat."

LITTLE BURGLARS

What has he stolen? Why, his mother's attention and the attention of the missionary lady. A little rough housebreaker.

Here are another group of little burglars. These boys were caught outside the home of a sick old lady who couldn't sleep very well and needed much rest. While the poor old soul was sleeping peacefully, and everyone said, "How nice that she is getting the rest," these young "yeggmen" broke into her sleep with war whoops, and catcalls, and Indian yells. What did they steal? Why, her rest for the remainder of that day. Little burglars.

And here is another lot. Girls this time. They came to church one day and all sat together. And as soon as the service began, they began to break in and enter and steal. They giggled, and they simpered, and they whispered, and they talked about their clothes, and nobody around them could listen to the sermon, and everybody got mad, which is disgraceful in the house of God, and the minister saw them and it worried him so that they stole his sermon and he couldn't think of a thing worth saying. What did they steal? Why, the comfort and peace of the people and the value of the service. Little burglars.

And here is another one. A girl, too, I am afraid. She comes to where a group of other girls are playing nicely together, and begins to make fun of what they are doing and to tell how much better she can do it than they. And in a moment

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she has broken in and broken up the fun, and every smile is gone and there is no more fun for a long time. What did she steal? Why, the joy and gladness out of several happy hearts.

What shall we do with such little breakers of God's law of love? Well, I think we'd better teach them the Eighth Commandment and show them how God hates dishonesty and unkindness in any form. And I think we'd better begin with the fellow that is "I," and, looking right into his face, tell him in the words of Paul, "Let him that stole steal no more."

GOD'S UNSEEN FACE

John 9: 1—"Blind from his birth."

My Bright-Eyed Juniors:

When Jesus was here on earth he saw some exceedingly sad sights, and in his infinite love he always tried to change their sadness into joy. But there were none sadder than the sight here mentioned, of the poor man that had been blind from his birth. Never to have seen the light of day, nor the blue sky, nor the green grass, nor the stars at night! Never to have looked upon the face of men, never to have been able to run about and play with his comrades! But Jesus did not leave these sad things long as he found them. We are told that he anointed with clay the eyes of the blind man, and told him to go and wash out the clay, and he came back seeing. What a happy day. How wonderful all things appeared! It was as if he had been born again.

Now the thing that I have been thinking about this story was suggested to me by a little account I read recently in a western paper, of a boy in Chicago who had the finest Christmas present of any boy in that city. Last Christmas Day they operated

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upon his blind eyes, which had not opened since he was two years old, and gave him back his sight. No boy ever got a present from a Christmas tree one half so wonderful as that. And the first thing he said was, "Now I can see my mother's face, which I haven't seen since I was a baby." I am thinking about this blind man in our story, that the first thing he would want to see would be the sweet face of the dear mother who had nursed him at her breast, and dandled him on her knee, and taught him to kneel and say his evening prayer, and had worked and slaved and toiled to bring him up to man's estate.

Charles Dickens has a very sweet little story which you must all read when you can, called, "The Cricket on the Hearth," in which there is an old toy maker with a blind daughter, Bertha. The old toy maker cares so lovingly for his dear little daughter, telling her wonderful stories about the palace they live in, and what a handsome man he is, and what a beautiful girl she is, and what wonderful clothes they wear, when, of course, all is poor and miserable and ragged. She can only feel his face and imagine him handsome, but she longs to know just how he looks. He is so good and kind to her.

This man in the story to-day could now look on his mother's face and his father's face, and see written there the love which he had so long been able to know by their actions.

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Now, boys and girls, we have all been blind since our birth into this world. We cannot see the face of the loving heavenly Father who has cared for and kept us so long. Yet we have known that he is always with us, and watching over us, that we could talk to him at any time of the day or night, that he protects us and guides our steps. When we arise he kisses us good morning. And when we lie down at night he tucks us in, and puts his angels about our beds. Why, we are like the enchanted princes in the fairy stories, shut up in castles and fed by invisible hands.

But the happy thing is that, like the blind man in this chapter, and like the blind boy in Chicago, we shall have our real eyes open, and we shall see our Father's face. Some of us already seem to see him, and are becoming like him. Once there was a little girl in Scotland who was very, very good, and no one could tell just why. When she died they undid the little nightdress, and found a locket in which she had written on a piece of paper, "Whom having not seen, I love." She loved Jesus even though she had not seen him. So can we. And then the glad day will come when we can see him, as the Bible says, "face to face," and know as we are known. Let us look forward to that, shall we?

THE GARDEN IN THE SEPULCHER

(Easter Sermon.)

John 19: 41—"Now in the place . . . was a garden; and in the garden a new tomb."

Objects—A tombstone of cardboard on which is written "Hic jacet," and a round stone of cardboard representing the stone in front of Christ's tomb, on which is written, "He is not here."

My Dear Juniors:

It makes all the difference in the world whether the sepulcher is in the garden, or the garden in the sepulcher. Our text tells us that the sepulcher was in the garden, but what I want to show at this Eastertide is that the garden was really in the sepulcher, that joy and beauty and sunshine and gladness was in that particular sepulcher in the garden, so that it seemed as if the garden was really in the sepulcher.

To most of us there is nothing at all beautiful in graves. Before Jesus came they were simply rents torn in the soil of mother earth. In the days of the Old Testament saints, to go down to the grave was a most hopeless affair. But Jesus has a way of transforming things and of elevating things that were despised.

He took a common broom, a candle, a lost penny,

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a sparrow, and made them objects remembered forever. But the most wonderful thing he did was to take the grave and transform it. He took away its loathsome aspect. He robbed it of its terrors and its gloom. He made it to seem like merely a covered passageway from earth to heaven, from death to life. Though actually the sepulcher or grave was in the garden, he made it seem for those who love him that the garden was in the grave.

I have here two gravestones with their inscriptions, which will give us the different ways of looking at death before and after Jesus went into the grave.

When we wander through a cemetery, and look at the gravestones, or go into an old church and read the monuments, we see the heading such as this upon the one I hold in my hand, "Hic jacet," or "Here lies," followed by the name of the person, the date of his birth and of his death or some word in praise of what he has done.

But how different is the other inscription on this other stone, which represents the stone rolled before the tomb of Jesus. It was not written in gold or carved in the marble, but it was spoken by the mouth of an angel and is written on the pages of the Word of God, the Bible. It is just the reverse of what is put on other tombs. "He is not here." One says, "Here lies," the other says, "He does not lie here, he is not here."

Now it is because of the fact recorded in this

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second inscription that we feel so differently to-day about dying, and can even feel that there is a garden of lovely flowers of hope and peace in the tomb. It is because Jesus was not there that Easter morning when they went to anoint him. It is because of the empty tomb of Jesus that all other tombs lose their terrors.

In one of the villages in northern India a missionary was preaching in a bazaar, and after he had closed, a Mohammedan gentleman came to him and said, "You must admit that we have one thing you Christians have not." "And what is that?" said the missionary. "You know, when we go to Mecca, we find at least a coffin, that of Mohammed, but when you Christians go to Jerusalem, your Mecca, you find only an empty tomb." "Yes," said the missionary, "that is what makes the difference. Mohammed is dead and therefore in his coffin. Jesus Christ is not in his grave, but in heaven, and that is our hope."

No, he was not there, only the graveclothes. And so it will be with those who love and follow him.

A little girl was going through a cemetery with her father for the first time. Seeing the graves, she said to her father, "What are these for?" Somewhat puzzled to give her an answer, her father said, "They belong to the people who have gone to heaven." "To the angels?" "Yes." "Oh, I see," said the little one, "that is where they have left their

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clothes." Exactly so. Since Jesus was not there, neither are our Christian friends there. Now that Jesus has died and risen again we never think of our dear dead friends as in the grave, but only as this little girl said, "with the angels."

The grave of the great painter, Albrecht Dürer, in Nuremberg, Germany, has on it simply this word, "Emigravit." He has emigrated, gone to another country.

We need never be afraid to die. Mr. Moody, the great evangelist, once said: "Some day you will hear that Dwight L. Moody is dead. Don't believe a word of it. At that moment I shall be more alive than I am now." But if Jesus had not risen, Moody could not have said that. So, because Jesus was not there, the gate to death becomes a gate to life. The grave is no longer a prison house. A poet makes a traveler come up to a gate on the mountain side where was written the inscription, "Gate of Death." But when he touched the gate it opened and he found himself in the midst of brightness, and, turning, he saw over the other side of the same gate, "Gate of Life."

Now if Jesus is not in the grave, he must be living. And that is the great message of Easter for us young people. The open tomb gives us back the Jesus who was crucified, to be our living, powerful Saviour and Friend. Because Jesus was not there he is at the Father's right hand, and is also at our side day by day. To-day we are celebrat-

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ing the birthday of the great explorer and missionary of Africa, David Livingstone. When Livingstone came back from his first trip to Africa he was given a degree by Glasgow University, and when he rose to receive it, the boys, as was the custom, began to make fun and shout and stamp. But when he stood there, tall and thin, with his left arm helpless at his side from the lion's bite, they all quieted down and listened. Then he said slowly: "Shall I tell you what has kept me in all the hardships and loneliness of my wandering? It was the promise of Jesus, 'Lo, I am with you always.'" And they all bowed their heads in silence.

Yes, young men and women, boys and girls, it is the beauty of Easter that Jesus is not in the grave, but with you and me always. This is the springtide of the year, its most beautiful season, and you are at the springtide of life, your most beautiful season. And life is all before you.

—"A simple Child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?"

What you need now is the living Jesus in your life. And Easter brings him to you if you will receive him. Live with him so that you can die with him, and when we come to write your inscription it will be that of your Master, not "Hic jacet," but "He is not here; for he is risen."

A BUNCH OF KEYS

Romans 3:23—"For all have sinned."

My Dear Juniors:

This seems hard to realize when we look as we do this morning into the faces of so many fine boys and girls, but it is true. Paul said it, and he also said that he was the chief of sinners.

We look this morning at the beauty of nature and it is hard to realize that this world is a world cursed with sin. But so it is. Sin is everywhere. I was thinking of this the other day as I looked at this bunch of keys in my hand. Every time I want to get into my own house I have to take out these keys and unlock the door. Why? Because there are such evil-minded men and women and so many of them in the world that I have to lock up my house to protect myself against them. Jesus said that this world was ruled by the prince of darkness called Satan, and many poor people are following him. We have but to go out with the missionary, or to go with the slum worker to see sin in its worst form. We can also come into our own homes, and, further still, into our own hearts.

The South Sea islanders have a tradition that

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the earth and sky once met, but that later on, by a great catastrophe, they were torn apart. They say that the dew which falls is composed of nature's tears, and that she is weeping over the separation. Once God and man were very good friends indeed, but sin tore heaven from earth and man from God, and there have been tears ever since. There is no part of the world where there are not tears.

Now, what I want you to understand is that sin is everywhere, and in every heart, and in your heart. The fact that you do not do things which others do, which you think are sins, is no indication that you do not sin. Here is a little story from "The Expositor":

"I have a niece whose name is Dolly. She was once visiting at the house of her aunt, and after the meal, when it was time for dessert, the hostess said, 'Well, Dolly, you'll take a piece of pie?'

"'No, ma'am,' said Dolly; 'my mother doesn't want me to eat pie.'

"Well, how fine we thought it was that a little six-year-old girl away from home should do just as her mother wanted her to do, whether her mother was there or not!

"But the next day, at dessert, we had a different kind of pie. The hostess said:

"'I believe you don't take pie, Dolly?'

"'Why, yes, ma'am, I'll take a piece,' said the girl, hesitating..

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“‘Why, Dolly,’ said her aunt, ‘I thought your mother didn’t want you to eat pie.’

“‘Well, I don’t like that kind of pie,’ the girl said.

“And so it is with our sins. We can give up those we don’t like.”

But if there is sin everywhere, there is a remedy for that sin everywhere. That remedy is the blood of Jesus, shed for us on the cross. What we want to know is that while sin did abound, grace did much more abound, that while Satan rules the world of sin to-day, Jesus has conquered him and will reign one day.

INSIDE OUT

Object—A cloud-shaped piece of black cloth on the rear of which has been pasted silver paper. On the front of the cloud can be written, "Grumbles," "Grumps," and so forth.

My Dear Juniors:

A rainy, gloomy day to-day. How that helps out my sermon to you this morning! I know you all want to see the sun. But we know that he is up there behind the clouds somewhere, and will come out if we only have plenty of patience. I have been thinking of that sweet little verse of Miss Fowler's:

The inner side of every cloud is bright and shining;
I therefore turn my clouds about,
And always wear them inside out, to show the lining.

Here in my hand I have a cloud—all black and gloomy, as most clouds are. And over the surface we have written, "Grumbles," and "Grumps," and "Sorrow," and "Pain," and a host of things that go to make up clouds in our young lives. But if Miss Fowler's story is true, then we must practice what we preach, and turn this cloud of ours inside out to find its lining, if such a gloomy, ugly thing can have any brightness about it. (Here turn the cloth the other side out.) Yes, it's all true; for here

INSIDE OUT

is a sparkling, silver lining, and on it, you see, is written, "God's sunshine"—which, of course makes the only proper lining for clouds. I hope, then, that we shall learn to treat all clouds in this fashion, and wear them inside out.

I once read of a story of a little boy and girl in the slums of London who did this very thing. Poor little waifs in the heart of East London! The boy found an old, fur-lined coat, moth-eaten and ragged, but he turned the fur side out, and put it on, looking very grand indeed. The little girl found an old golf cape with a faded red lining, but outside in it went, and inside out she wore it, and they paraded up and down the streets as happy as two youngsters could be; and when some one stopped them and asked who they were, the girl drew herself up with pride and said, "Please, mum, I'm the Queen of Hingland, 'an 'e's the bloomin' Dook o' York."

Mr. Bonner tells us about two buckets in a well. One was always wearing the dark side of his cloud out, and he said, "Every time I come up full of water I have to give it away and go back empty." The other wore his clouds with the silver lining out, and he said, "Every time I go down empty I am always able to come up full of cold water for some thirsty one."

I am thinking of two great men of God who wore their clouds inside out. They were called Paul and Silas, and one night when they were put in the deep, damp prison with their feet in the stocks, they

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sang hymns in the night and all the prisoners heard them and were glad. It pays to keep the lining out where poor souls can see it.

I wonder if we are looking for the sunshine all the time? My old cat, who sleeps always in the window of my study, and helps me get up my sermons every week, has been absent recently for several days from his post of duty, and when I went for him, I found him each time in the most outlandish places, lying in the sunshine. A little boy of whom I know was sitting in the sunshine one day grasping at it with his little hand and saying, "My sunshine, my sunshine." And that is what we all can do.

But there is another thing we can do—we can hand on the sunshine to others. I have in my hand here a little looking-glass, and if there were any sunshine here to-day I could play "Tommy tinker" with you. I could throw the sunshine back to you with this mirror. So, like this mirror, we must pass on all the sunshine and joy of life we can get.

"Scatter sunshine
All along your way
Cheer and bless and brighten
Every passing day."

Now the way to have a constant sunny day is this: Jesus said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life." So the secret of constant sunshine is, "Follow Christ."

CHOOSING ONE'S BIRTHDAY.

(Christmas Sermon.)

Matthew 2:1—"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king."

Objects—A crown, a scepter (made of paper), a gilded spoon, a dollar sign, a toy hoe, a tin trolley car, a flag, a house.

Merry Christmas to you, Juniors. This is a birthday, and this birthday has made worth while all birthdays. And as we are thinking of birthdays, wouldn't it be queer if every fellow could choose his own birthday? If he could choose where he would like to be born, and when, and of what parents. Sometimes we get the idea that there has been a mistake about our birthdays. There are people of whom we say that they ought to have been born in the last century. Of one man we say that he was born ahead of his time. Of another, we say that he should have been born rich, and of another, he should have been born in Europe, instead of America, and so on.

Suppose, then, that we could all go out of the world, with a chance to come back and be born over again, and had the choice of when, and where, and of whom we should be born. Some would choose, perhaps, that this crown which I hold here

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should be placed on their baby heads, and that this scepter should be placed in their hands. They feel that they have never had enough power in this world, and so they want to be born as princes or as kings. And there are others, on the contrary, who, having grown tired of being kings, have wished that they might be born poor.

Some want to be born with this golden spoon in their mouths, and have this dollar sign engraved upon their cradles. All their lives they have slaved and drudged at hard work, and they would like to feel the power of having some wealth. "If I were born again," say they, "I would be rich."

And some would like to be born with great beauty. All their lives they have considered themselves plain and unattractive, and now they would like to be born again a Venus de Milo, or a Beau Brummel.

And there are some that would like to choose the place where they are to be born. Here is the country boy with his hoe. (Hold up the toy hoe.) He is tired of the farm, and lonesome, and he would like to be born the next time in the hustling, bustling city. And here again is the city boy, who rides in a trolley like this (showing the toy car) wherever he goes. He would like next time to be born on the farm, and grow up among the chickens and cows. He is tired of the smells and noise of the city, and he wants the fresh air and woods. When your pastor was a boy, he used to

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live in the country, and occasionally take trips with his father to New York City. In those days he always wished he had been born in New York. And, of course, there are many foreigners who were born in the oppressed countries like Russia and Persia, who, if they were born again, would choose to be born in the "land of the free and the home of the brave." And there are some that would like to be born in a house like this and not in a hut like this.

Then, too, there are those that would like a chance to choose their own parents, and have a chance to say who should be their grandmother. There are hundreds of little tots that would like to have different parents. A pitiful little story came to me the other day of a little girl who came to the divorce court and said, "Are you the judge?" "Yes," said the kindly looking judge, "and what can I do for you, miss?" "Please, sir," she faltered, "I want to get a divorce from my mother."

You children that have good parents are not half grateful enough sometimes. What kind of parents would some children like? Some would choose rich parents, and some would choose stylish parents. Some time ago a little girl was heard praying at her bedside, "O God, please make us awful stylish." Some want parents that seem to have some power and authority. The other day I heard a little fellow say, "My, but I wish my farder was a cop."

And so you see I have been thinking over the

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matter of how amusing it would be if every fellow had a chance to choose how, when, and where, and of what parents he might be born. And as I thought, I remembered that there was such a boy once that had just such a choice given him. Just one in all the universe that had that chance to choose where, and when, and how, and of what parents he was to be born. And he took the chance and made the choice. And it is that Boy's birthday we are to-day celebrating.

First, he chose his mother. I want you to notice that he did not choose a queen or a woman of social position or wealth, but a peasant woman.

Then he chose the time. And the time he chose was not a time of pleasure for him, but a time of need for others.

Then he chose the conditions. And he did not choose to be born with the golden spoon in his mouth, but to be born in a home where there was a carpenter's bench and a hammer and saw ready for his baby hands to work at and with.

Then he chose the place. Not the great city, but the little town of Bethlehem. He came "up from the country," at the "crossroads," whence many a great man has come. And he was not born in the palace, but in the hut. He chose his bed on which to put his baby head. And it was not a golden cradle, with eider-down pillows, and the dollar sign engraved all over it, but a manger in which was hay for the lowly oxen. Oh, how dif-

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ferent this all was from the choices we would make!

You have guessed already who this boy was. Jesus is the only Man who ever chose his own birthday, and the place, and the conditions.

Away off in eternity, God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Spirit, talked of the sinful world, and Jesus decided to come and save it, and he chose to be born into it. Now why did he choose as he did? I think it was to show us how simple God is; to show us how simple life is; to tell us how childlike we must be. And, of course, he came finally to free us from sins, on the cross. Jesus chose for us. He had us in view when he chose. He chose to be poor that we might be rich.

Now Jesus is being born this Christmas Day, born in human hearts. Paul says, "Until Christ be formed in you." He means that as the life of the little chicken grows in the egg, so the life of Jesus grows in us. I feel sure that Jesus will choose to be born in us—when? When we are poor in spirit; when we are meek and lowly; when we are small (in our own eyes) like the little town of Bethlehem, which was little among the cities of Judah; when we are pure in heart like Mary.

He couldn't be born in the inn, you remember, because there was no room for him there. How is it with your hearts? Jesus is seeking to be born again to-day by his Spirit in your hearts. Will you give him room?

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